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THE

MYSTERIES OF THE VATICAN.

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THE

MYSTERIES OF THE VATICAN:

OR,

CRIMES OF THE PAPACY.

FROM THE GERMAN OF DR. THEODOR GRIESINGER.

TRANSLATED BY

E. S.

"Ed or discerno perchè dal retaggio
Li figli de Levì furono esenti."
DANTE, canto xvi., del Purgatorio

"Ahi, Costantin, di quanto mal fu matre
Non la tua conversion, ma quella dote,
Che da te prese il primo ricco Patre!"
Canto xix., del' Inferno.

"And now do I perceive why Levi's sons
Received no part in Canaan's portioned land."

"How vast the evil wrought, oh, Constantine,
Not thy conversion, but the fatal dower
That from thy hand the first rich Patre took!"

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
WM. H. ALLEN & CO., 13, WATERLOO PLACE, S.W.
1864.

PREFACE.

To many, perhaps, my purpose in writing the following pages may seem sufficiently problematical; some will, doubtless, question the wisdom of again stirring up the old leaven (Sauerteig) of the papacy. "Let the dead rest in peace," they may tell me—"the days of Papal dominion have long passed away—wherefore remind those who hold the dogmas of Rome of the sins and misdeeds of the earlier High-priests of their Church?"

Thus I may be met; but I would ask, in return, "is, then, the papacy a thing of the past merely? Rather, has it not, within the last ten years, shown renewed vitality, whilst it has employed all the means at its disposal in an attempt to conjure back to earth the darkness of the mediæval ages? During this very decade, has not all been done that priestly influence could effect to restore the ancient prestige of priestly rule? This triumph, too, has been secured: that, in certain circles, those who dare characterise priestly assumptions and ultramontane intolerance in fitting terms, are denounced

as enemies of the Church, and thus, by a studied confusion of ideas, the opponent of Rome is condemned as a foe to religion.

"Ultramontanism," therefore, is not dead, nor the old thirst of the papacy for despotic power. The various concordates, secured or proposed, within these latter years are alone sufficient proof of this; but proof still more emphatic is offered by the conduct of the clergy in those countries where a concordate is in operation. There, Rome puts forth no hesitating *feelers* (Fuhlhörner) merely, but talons rather of Gregorian development. Was it not, then, full time to utter our protest in the face of day, and do what may be in our power against the monstrous abuses of the papal system?

It is from this point of view I would beg the reader to regard the present work; and though it offer little actually original except its method of arrangement, it may yet be of some interest and use, as it will furnish him with a general view of what the popes from of old did and sought to do; and "how, and by what means."

THEODOR GRIESINGER.

STUTTGART, *September*, 1861.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

A CONCISE sketch of the principal events, and slowly developing characteristics, which mark the rise, culmination, and decline of the Papal Regnum, has long been wanting to our book shelves. The present work, which, by Dr. Theodor Griesinger's kind permission, I am now enabled to submit to English readers, will, I believe, admirably meet that want. It has no pretence to displace the more elaborate studies which in Germany and England have appeared on papal history,—but to offer those who care not to enter on an extended investigation of the influences which successively created and deified the tiara, a clear conception how those influences were utilised to the result obtained.

Commencing with St. Peter, whose sojourn in Rome

Dr. Griesinger, with most modern critics, holds highly problematical, he paints the forlorn condition of the first Christians in the eternal city, where, in honour of the gods of Latium, Christian blood flowed as water, or as it has since flowed to the cry of "heresy!"

He shows us the rapid corruption of the church under imperial adoption,—the awakening lust of power in the episcopal breast; and how, under Constantine, Clovis, the Valois, the Hapsburgs, the modern Bourbons,—monarchical and priestly unrighteousness have gone hand in hand; and the "in hoc signo vinces" has been interpreted by succeeding despots as meaning the cross of St. Peter over the Vatican. He displays the many aspects under which papal greed was successively disguised, though so thin was the veil sometimes it could never have outlasted, but for the vast army of priestly sycophants so deeply interested in its preservation.

Of papal licentiousness, our author has not dared say all he could have said, nor have I in every instance given the full force of his words. In truth, he smites and spares not, believing, that as it is just and noble to pardon the vanquished, it is yet incumbent on us to know no flinching whilst the foe still retains any power of wrong doing, "for we are not altogether here to tolerate! We are here to resist and vanquish withal.

* * * We are here to extinguish falsehoods, and put an end to them in some wise way." With a broad impartiality he studiously separates the better development of catholicism to be still found distinct from the pretensions of the pope. The distinction may scarcely seem to imply a difference to many of us, accustomed as we are to the ultramontane tone of the English Roman Catholic press; but to those who have seen the growing feeling of honest irritation at the worn-out assumptions of Romish supremacy, grown so widely prevalent within the last few years among the secular priesthood and middle and lower class laity on the continent, the distinction will readily be appreciable.

From personal observation, during a prolonged residence in Germany, I am convinced the downfall of the temporal power of Rome, or even of papal spiritual supremacy, would create there scarce more concern than of old in our England under the second Tudor. Doubtless, the historical classes—royal, baronial, and monastic —would presage therein the coming end of all things; but the more intelligent majority of the town population, and nearly every member of the lower clergy, would heartily welcome the change. The latter are growing ever more impatient at the constant foreign supervision to which they are subjected, and chafe at

pontifical briefs which, not content with setting forth now and again some new dogma which the trans-Alpine mind is little disposed to accept, descend to the regulation of the pettiest details of priestly life.*

That our author's fears, from the recovered vitality of Rome, are well founded, many may question, as he himself suggests; but whilst constantly new mediævalists amongst us, whose logical faculties have been overgrown by the fantastical imaginative, continue to abandon the faith of Luther and St. Paul for that of Loyola and the holy Januarius, it is not well to neglect and weary of warning, nor gloze over the iniquities of

> "colei, che siède sovra acqua,
> Puttanegiar coi regi."†

* To cite but one case in point, which I must quote from memory:—In the spring of 1863 Bavaria was startled and amused by a letter in the public press from the papal nuncio here, Cardinal Gonella, in which His Eminence stated: "It had come to the ears of the Holy Father in Rome that certain priests, under the influence of the dire modern spirit of innovation, now suffered their whiskers to grow on cheeks and chin, and in some instances cut not the hair of the head in the prescribed manner. In these evil days, when reverence for holy things groweth ever weaker, it is incumbent to avoid all such unaccustomed modes, fraught as they may be with the most serious perils; therefore, the Holy Father directeth that the like new modes shall be henceforth discontinued, under pain," &c., &c.

† Cited from the Apocalypse, verses 1 and 2, chapter xvii., in Canto xix., *dell Inferno*.

as, anticipating the denunciations of the Reformers, the great Ghibelline poet entitled papal Rome.

The English reader will especially appreciate the testimony Dr. Griesinger bears to the determined resistance offered again and again by our countrymen to the encroachments of Rome; his sympathy with the liberal cause in Italy;—his ready meed of praise to the efforts of Italian patriotism;—detestation of tyranny, whether monarchical or theocratic, and still more, perhaps, the absence from his pages of any trace of that "Neo theology" so strangely prevalent in modern criticism: such characteristics cannot fail the more readily to naturalise his present work among ourselves, imparting as they do to his pictures that thorough vitality which honest human love for the right, and hate of the wrong, never fail to give.

I may add, that in translating the "Mysteries of the Vatican," I have endeavoured to truly reproduce the idiosyncracies of the original work, though venturing in a few instances to slightly condense the text. An analytical index, affixed to this edition, may facilitate its use for reference. Though I have too long detained the reader, I shall, perhaps, best justify my exordium by closing it with those famous lines of the "Divina Co-

media," which offer so apt an epitome of the "Mysteries of the Vatican:"

"Che la mala condotta
'E la cagion, che'l mondo ha fatto reo.
'E non natura, che'n voi sia corotta.
Soleva Roma, che 'l buon mondo feo,
Duo Soli aver, che l'una è l'altra strada
Facean vedere, e del mondo, e di Deo.
L'un l'altro ha spento, ed è giunta la spada.
Col pasturale, e l'uno e l'altro insieme,
Per viva forza mal convien che vada:
Perocchè giunti, l'un l'altro non teme.
Se non mi credi, pon mente alla spiga:
Ch'ogni erba si conosce per lo seme."*

E. S.

MUNICH, *July*, 1864.

* "Not Nature's faults,
But evil guidance, hath the world corrupted.
When Rome, God's new evangel, taught the world,
Rome held two suns, which o'er life's two-fold path:
This for our world's,—that for God's service,—shone.
But one sank quenched in the other's blaze,
And sword and bishop's staff conjoined were
Within the self-same hand. That union,
By lawless force achieved, could bode but ill:
For each, by turns, the other's minion grew.
Judge for thyself, an thou misdoubtest me:
By its own fruit thou shalt condemn the tree."

DANTE, *Purgatorio*, Canto xvi.

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BOOK I.

POPE AND POVERTY.

" Wo Geiz ist und Gier nach fremd Geld und Gut,
Da der Betrug auch nicht ausbleiben thut.
Darauf der diebisch Teufel sich nicht saumt,
Sein Ross hat er bald aufgezaumt;
Den Wucher hat er in seinem nächsten Gefolg,
Und selbst Mord scheut er nicht fürs Gold."

Aus dem Buch " Von den Zehn Teufeln."

" Where Greed and Lust for others' gear doth hide,
Guile too will fail not to abide.
The thievish Fiend bridles his nag straightway,
And thither hastens quickly as he may;
Foul Usury with his best loved minions goes,—
Murder he welcomes, so she gold bestows."

MYSTERIES OF THE VATICAN.

CHAPTER I.

EPISCOPACY IN THE PRIMITIVE CENTURIES. THE VATICAN.

THE social organisation of the primitive Christian communities was of the very simplest character, in accordance with the spirit impressed on them by the Founder of Christianity. At Christ's coming the various creeds professed by men—Judaism especially, had long since lapsed into mere ceremonial—the observance of external forms and sacrifices, from which spiritual sense and feeling were totally gone. Christ denounced this ceremonial worship, teaching that not the outward fulfilment of the law constituted religion, but the inward devotion of the heart—the praying to God in spirit and in truth. He denounced the dogmas of the priests, which prescribed blind submission to the dead letter

of the Scriptures, and proclaimed that love, humility, and long suffering, could alone reconcile humanity to heaven.

This spirit of love, humility, and long suffering, still lingered in the scattered communities founded by the apostles and disciples of Christ. None of the new converts were exalted above the others, none could claim precedence of their brethren—the object of all was to manifest — greater love—greater humility. All were equal, with equal rights and equal duties. The very apostles did not place themselves above their fellow believers, they did but labour with higher zeal, and self-devoting energy, seeking their sole distinction in the services and sacrifices they rendered to the new gospel.

As in individual churches, each member of the flock enjoyed perfect spiritual equality with the rest; the churches collectively pretended to no precedence or official superiority one over the other. Their only distinction, that one might boast a greater number of, or more wealthy members, or possibly was situated in a district less exposed to the stern honours* of martyrdom.

Each church had the same privileges, the same duties as every other, and the like rule held good with each individual believer. Order was not less well maintained, and the affairs of the Communities, their government and administration, so to speak, suffered nothing from this freedom and equality. The members of each provided for the management of its collective interests, by

* The early Christians were especially liable to persecution through the influence of the Jews, who denounced them to the Roman authorities as an heretical Jewish sect, of subversive political tendencies.

appointing a president and subordinate officials, in whose hands was placed the responsibility of the general management, and thus a system of ecclesiastical government was established, though a purely voluntary one. The president, after the manner of the Jewish synagogue, was entitled Elder, or Presbyter; sometimes Episcopus (bishop—overlooker), simply because he had the overlooking of the general welfare of the community.

The elders or presbyters were assisted by deacons or almoners, who acted as treasurers to their respective communities.* Other officers there were none, nor were there any stated preachers or exponents of the new law, every Christian in their almost nightly gatherings was entitled to preach and pray according to his conscience and ability. Even women were not excepted, and traditions still remain of the pious results which crowned the labours of many among them. We can readily understand that the possession of exceptional spiritual gifts, or the previous exhibition of peculiar zeal, would be sought in those entrusted with the representative office of bishop or presbyter, and that men so distinguished would inevitably become the spiritual guides of their brethren. In time the custom became generally established, that none were appointed to the highest charge in the church, who did not possess the power of adequately expounding its doctrines; though

* The treasurer had little else to do than receive the alms of the richer members for distribution among the poorer brethren, the amount in each case being regulated by the possessions of the giver. Thus was equality practically established, though it never merged into communism, as the alms were voluntarily bestowed.

others, more or less gifted, might still preach and teach as before, and the presbyter was unendowed with any official prerogatives.

Such was the constitution of the Christian churches in the time of the apostles, and far into the second century of our era. In the third century, when believers amounted to many hundred thousand, this basis was little modified, though several of the larger communities had necessarily risen in individual importance. These were the mother churches from which Christianity had been carried into the surrounding districts. Their spiritual colonies, like those bound by merely temporal ties, naturally regarded the parent community with peculiar respect and love, sought thence teachers and preachers, and were happy whilst actually independent, to assume a dependent relationship towards it. Thus, if we may use the modern words, "parishes" or "dioceses" grew up around each spiritual nucleus, whilst the dignity of the latter rose in proportion to that of the province or city in which it was placed. If such a Church had been founded by the personal labours of one of the apostles, thus obtaining the New Law close to its fountain head, its credit was so much the more enhanced, and from every side contested points of doctrine or discipline was submitted to its decision, the disputants thus hoping to learn how the apostle would have decided in this or that issue. Yet this authority was founded merely on voluntary respect, not claimed or accorded as a dogmatic right. The only bond of union which united all, was a like faith, hope, love.

As with the Churches, so with the presidents of the

Churches. If the members greatly increased, a single deacon, still more a single presbyter, soon proved quite insufficient. With added numbers duties were multiplied, and several presbyters, several deacons, had in such cases to be appointed. These collectively formed a council or collegium, and were necessarily obliged to choose one of their number to preside at their deliberations.

The most able and respected of the body was generally chosen for this post of President or Chief Elder; and to distinguish him from his brother presbyters, the distinctive title of Episcopus, now generally used, which, though it in nowise invested the bearer with any peculiar power or individual prerogative, served to mark his relative position towards his colleagues.

Such was the internal polity of the Christian church during the first two centuries,—in those centuries, indeed, when it was still unrecognised by the State, and the rich and powerful held back from baptism as from something vulgar and unseemly.

But our present business is with Rome; it is to see there amid the ruins of a bygone world,—triumphant evidence of the vast change time and cunning have effected, in a Church whose simplicity was of old its most marked characteristic.

We all know St. Paul established a community of Christians at Rome, during his two years' residence at the capital. Its "chief elder" was soon honoured with the title of "episcopus," and the provincial communities learned to regard him with peculiar reverence. The story of the persecutions under Nero, Caligula, and

their successors, is familiar to all,—those terrible days, when, after the Christian fraternity had been ruthlessly decimated, those still left were but too glad to seek temporary safety in the dark recesses of the catacombs.*

And we may well believe, that he who should accept so perilous an honour as episcopal duties in the capital of the Cæsars, must have far more highly prized the service of the faith than his own temporal happiness or well-being. The earlier Roman bishops were indeed poor and unpretending, though pious and self-devoted men; not even possessing any appointed temple where their flocks might meet to worship.† How often, indeed, they knew not where to lay their heads, when the sanguinary decrees of the imperators went forth against the worshippers of the Nazarene. Nearly all died a martyr's death, and still receive the honours accorded by the Catholic church to those who die for her faith.‡

* The catacombs are great but irregular excavations, extending under the greater part of Rome. They originated in vast gravel pits and stone quarries, are all interconnected; but as the earth has caved in, in many places are no longer open through their full length. It is, however, asserted, they are fifteen miles in length, and extend as far as Ostia. They can be entered at several points; generally, the openings are placed beneath a church. There are a good many chapels within them, containing the bones of early martyrs. In earlier ages, the catacombs provided the natural refuge for the Christians during the persecutions, and thither they carried the bodies of those sacrificed for the faith, to raise there lasting memorials of their devotion. In all, about 174,000 persons have been buried within them, fourteen Roman bishops among the number.

† The first church, or basilica rather, built in Rome, was that erected in the reign of Constantine; smaller ones already existed in various provinces of the empire, as early as the time of Diocletian.

‡ As saints Anaclet, Sixtus, Victor Calixtus, &c., &c.

All this needs no recapitulation here. We turn from the ruined Coliseum, where Christian massacre offered a specific for imperial ennui, to the proud dwelling of Rome's later masters,—to the Vatican, to the huge Colossus that frowns down, dark and menacing, like some uncouth stone thunder-god, whose head is hidden by the clouds, whose rock-feet threaten to crush the rock upholding it. The Vatican, the possession of those who have succeeded the humble chief elders of whom we have just spoken. The Vatican, the royal residence of Christ's vicegerents,—so long sole arbiters of thought and creed throughout all Christendom; the dread potentates, whose sceptre reaches over heaven, purgatory, hell. The Vatican, that covers a space 15,000 feet in length, 800 in breadth; which includes within its walls twenty courts, two hundred stairs, eleven thousand halls of ceremony and smaller apartments, whose erection has cost countless millions.

What a strange, nay, inconceivable change, between the past and present! On the one side, we behold the gentle, yet high-souled martyrs of the first three centuries; on the other, the lords of this palace unequalled in riches and magnificence by any on earth! Its mere outward aspect astounds and bewilders us; but we must see more. We must enter within its charmed portals, until, as in a dream, thou criest, "A miracle, a miracle!" We pass through the colonnade round the Piazzo San Pietro, and reach a vestibule, where stands the equestrian statue of the first Christian emperor; then, by the grand Bernini Scala, fitted, indeed, it seems for some luxurious monarch, with his gay train of rustling cour-

tiers and fair dames to pass down for their daily sports to the "Sala-regia;" royal, indeed, in its splendour and vastness,—a marble floor, ceiling fretted with delicate intaglio, and superb pictures covering the walls. Ah! the popes loved the refining influences of art! and the subjects here how aptly chosen for the dwelling of a Christian priest: battle, ban, and foul assassination,—"Lepanto, Gregory excommunicating the emperor Frederic, and the murder of the white-haired Coligny.

We pass from the Sala Regia into the "Sistina," the matchless chapel, built by Sixtus V., and stand in silent awe before the dark menacing forms of the Last Judgment of Michael Angelo, as they loom down through the incense-loaded air, in strange contrast with the rustling silk, the gold-broidered, jewelled vestments of the ministering priests. Listen! the papal choir is singing the "miserere;" listen! for nowhere else on earth can those marvellous strains be heard as they are here. The passionate cry of human misery and abasement mounts higher and higher, filling the vaulted roof; but the painted "prophets" and "sibyls" are not less deaf to its meaning than the living wearers of those bright scarlet robes who hear nothing but a more or less excellent sopranist or laudible baritone.

The Sala Regia gives access, also, to the Pauline chapel. Michael Angelo's famous pictures, the Conversion of St. Paul and Crucifixion of St. Peter, are both there. In the "Paulina," the popes celebrate several of the chief festivals of the church; and there the representation of Christ's entombment is enacted with peculiar solemnity; whilst around the holy sepulchre

thousands of lamps and wax tapers, making a very fairy-land of light and splendour. Close at hand stands the Sala Ducale, with its mighty vault, covered with superb paintings by the hand of Rafaellino, Matteo da Sieno, Lorenzenio,—others, too many to recapitulate. On Maunday Thursday here it is the Pope, surrounded by the dignitaries of his church, washes the feet of the twelve old men, typical of the apostles! Near are the "Paramente," where the Pope robes before being carried on men's shoulders in his throne chair to sing high mass at St. Peter's. These chapels and halls occupy one wing of the Vatican, the wing adorned with the four famous loggie which encircle it row above row. In plan and decoration these grand arcades are alike remarkable: originating with Giulio da Majano, they were subsequently rebuilt after designs by the prince of painters, Raphael. But the arcades of the second story, the "Loggia di Rafaelle" is the loggia par excellence of the great Florentine, containing as it does two hundred and fifty pictures bearing his name. The first and fourth loggia boast many beautiful pictures, whilst the third has its walls covered with curious maps dating from 1572 to 1583, drawn by the learned Dominican, Ignatio Dante.

We enter the "New Palace," still in the Vatican, but another wing, looking towards the Piazzo Vaticano. Here are the private apartments of His Holiness, the offices of the Cardinal Secretary of State, and other government bureaux. Elegant salons, luxurious cabinets, grand halls,—we pass through them all in rapid, bewildering succession; they are too many that we can mark them,—only lingering a moment to gaze on the

frescoes in the Sala San Clemente, or glance at the pictures we are told represent the life of the fond countess Mathilda,—Pope Gregory's "friend." Then, passing through the apartments of Pope Nicholas V., we reach the four vast halls, the Stanze of Raphael, and for a moment forget the popes and Vatican alike, before the glories of that art the successors of St. Peter have so well made subserve their purposes.

The Stanze are Raphael's master work. The very manner of their origin is sufficiently remarkable. Pope Sixtus had the four walls built and adorned by the greatest artist of his time; then Julius II. summoned Raphael to Rome, and commissioned him to paint the Controversy on the Sacrament, for one of them. Raphael produced the "Disputa," and it so delighted Julius he at once ordered all the other pictures to be effaced, and walls and ceiling re-adorned from Raphael's designs alone. The first Stanza is illustrated with the life and conversion of the Emperor Constantine; the second Stanza has the unequalled Heliodorus; the third, the School of Athens; and the fourth, "Stanza del incendio del Borgo Vecchio," takes its name from the fresco representing a burning suburb, miraculously saved by the interposition of Pope Leo IV. We cannot attempt to enumerate the multitude of other works here by Raphael and his pupils,—they would far exceed our space. We traverse the apartments of Nicholas V. to enter those of Pius V., containing the largest of all the picture galleries within the Vatican. Here, then, we must pause; here await us the "most" famous works of the most famous masters; and though other collections may be more nu-

merous; none in the whole world can equal this, in the value of its treasures. Here, is the famous "Christ," of Correggio, "sitting between angels;" Guercino's "Magdalene;" "St. Hieronimus" of Domenichino; the "Crucifixion of St. Peter," by Guido; "Christ's Sepulture," by Caravaggio; "St. Helena," by Paul Veronese; others —it is needless to enumerate them—by Titian, Fiesole, Perugino, Raphael. If to this gallery we add the other paintings gathered within the Vatican, neither the collections made by English wealth, French kings, or Russian czars, would reach a tithe of the worth of all that is here gathered.

Yet the measure of our wonder is not yet full. Still we have to see the world-renowned Museo Vaticano, the value of whose sculptures could be told only by millions. First, the magnificent "Gallery of vases and candelabra." Rich marble columns support the vaulted roof of its six compartments. Within it stand the world-famous Niobe, the Diana, the Clytemnestra, &c.; fauns, sileni, Egyptian monuments, &c., &c. Then follows the Sala of the Ear, occupied by an antique chariot with marble horses, and the eight famous statues, the Apollo, Bacchus, Perseus, Alcibiades, &c., &c., &c. Then the Sale of the Etruscan Museum; then the Sala of the Muses; then the Statue Gallery, formerly the palace of Innocent VIII., and comprising—the Sala of the Masks, —the cabinet of the Laocoon,—that of Apollo Belvedere,—that of Perseus, of Mercury, the Egyptian Museum, the Museum of Antiquities, the Chiaremonte Museum; and finally, the great Gregorian Museum.

For long, long hours, we are surrounded by an ever-

changing, exhaustless panorama, and turn at length away well nigh dazzled and overpowered with the wealth and the wonders scattered round.

Yet our task must be fulfilled, and we enter the Vatican library. It is no unworthy rival even of those museums we have just hurried through. Originated by Pope Hilarius, anno 465, with a collection of manuscripts, it was removed to the Vatican by Sixtus V., a new wing having been built for its reception; and many and rapid were the additions made to this large nucleus; for Rome enjoyed resources not granted to other lands. No less than six great libraries were absorbed. Among them, the famous collection of Heidelberg,* given to the popes by the Elector of Bavaria, 1623; that of Alessandrina,† by Christina of Sweden, 1690; the Urbino, by the Dukes of Urbino, &c., &c. The Vatican library is the largest in the world, though its greatest riches consists in rare manuscripts. Among the more precious, we may enumerate a copy of the Divina Commedia, transcribed by Boccaccio; the breviary of King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary; the most ancient copy of Terence; seventeen original letters from Henry VIII. to Anne Boleyn, and many of Luther's writings in autograph.

It numbers 22,277 printed books; of which 18,108 are Latin, 3469 in Greek, 1466 in Asiatic tongues, and 851 in African.

* Tilly had seized it for his master, Maximilian of Bavaria, who gave it to the Pope.

† This "book oblation" had been collected by the strong hand of Gustavus Adolphus, during the Thirty Years' War; and his daughter, on reconciliation to Rome, offered it to Alexander VIII., as some expiation of her father's "misdeeds."

Still in the Vatican, still more museums: museum of orthodox antiquities, bishops' crosiers from the primitive centuries of our era, instruments of torture used for the martyrdom of Christians under Roman emperors, the most ancient portrait of Christ extant, &c., &c.; then, the Profane Museum offers its prodigious gathering of idols in gold, silver, bronze, stone, &c., &c.; weapons, tools, mosaics, &c., &c. But we at length reach the last museum, —and then? No, the Vatican is not exhausted; though we cannot attempt to see it all, we must glance ere we depart at the famous "Borgia apartment" built by Alexander VI., and for ever associated with the crimes and orgies of his reign. Modest as is the title, we enter a veritable palatial residence; halls, salons, chambers, numberless, with walls and ceilings covered with the labours of the most famous artists of their day. The furniture has been quite changed since the time of the Borgias, when the luxury and splendour lavished here might vainly have been sought in the zenanas of the most voluptuous oriental monarch. We hurry on through all the remaining grandeurs, and feel relieved to stand once more in the free air of heaven. We have seen the Vatican;* have seen what fabulous sums may well have been

* We must add a few words on the origin and history of the Vatican. Constantine erected a residence on its site for Bishop Sylvester who had baptized him, and later bishops, especially Liberius and Symachus, enlarged it in proportion to their increased wealth. Towards the close of the eighth century the Vatican had become so great that the Emperor Charlemagne found accommodation in it for all his suite when he visited Rome for coronation. It was still largely added to subsequently, one wing was built after another; the work went on with the greatest energy under Gregory IV., Sixtus IV., Alexander VI., Paul III,. Clement XIV., and Pius VI.

needed to unite beneath one roof treasures equal to an empire's ransom; and marvellous indeed it seems how the successors of the scorned and persecuted chief elders of ancient Rome have developed into the lords of such a superfluity of wealth, the possessors of this wondrous palace. Yet have we seen but a moiety of the magnificent possessions of the High Priests of Rome. In the Piazzo Vaticano have we not the Duomo San Pietro before us, the largest and the costliest temple in the world! we all know how not only the Santa Sophia of Constantinople but even St. Paul's of London might stand beneath its vast arched roof. It had cost, by the accounts kept in St. Peter's chancery, up to the commencement of the last century, upwards of 46,800,498 gold florins. Eight million five hundred thousand pounds of our money, though this does not represent the comparative value bestowed by the successors of the "scorned and persecuted chief elders and martyrs" on one church alone, and there are three hundred and eleven other churches in this priestly city of the priests, a third part of which have been erected at the papal cost, whilst the same inexhaustible treasury contributed largely to the others. Are not these things proofs sufficient of the fabulous revenues of the "heirs of the martyrs." But if evidence be still wanting, we find it triumphantly awaiting us in the Quirinal, the Summer house of Pleasaunce of the popes. No simple retreat for tranquil ecclesiastical summer retirement, with its fifteen or twenty unpretending chambers. One wing alone, that towards the Porta Pia, is three hundred paces in length; the Imperial Palace in Vienna numbers

scarcely half the halls and chambers contained in the papal summer palace! Of these we need but recall the Sala Regia, the Sala d'Audienza, the Sala del Congregatione. Let us not forget the magnificent park behind with its statues and fountains, and graceful pavilion, in whose discreet chambers the popes were wont to receive fair dames who sought audience of their holinesses. Besides the Quirinal, there remains a third palace, belonging to the heirs of Poverty, the famous Lateran, now devoted to the Museo Laterano. It existed as early as the sixth century, and was used by the popes both before and after the Avignon exile, until it grew too small for the requirements of its masters; it was then rebuilt by Sixtus V., and nothing now remains of the original structure but the Nicholine chapel, with its fifty-five twisted columns. This chapel contains that invaluable relic! the so-called Scala Santa, the marble stairs by which Christ is said to have ascended to Pilate's Judgment Hall.

Palaces, museums, churches, chapels, all these we have seen, yet one of the most important, the most prized of all the papal possessions in the Eternal city, has been left unnoted—the Castle of Angelo, one of the strongest citadels in the world, to which access is obtained by a private subterranean passage from the Vatican. From the beginning the subjects of the pope have proved very refractory vassals, and carnal weapons, and stout stone walls have been necessary to preserve the spiritual throne. The successors of St. Peter needed a citadel; Hadrian's vast monument and tomb admirably met their requirements, so they dispossessed the

dead emperor, and fortified his mausoleum with all requisite outworks.*

Half the revenues of the world must have been required to collect all the splendours and rarities gathered in episcopal Rome. Yet we have left unmarked Michael Angelo's New Capitol, built under the pontificates of Paul III. and Boniface IX., and to which the wing was subsequently added which now contains the Museo Capitolino and picture gallery, both scarcely exceeded in interest and riches by any of those in Rome. We may not dimly imagine the treasure they represent, when the catalogue of the antiquities alone occupies four massive folio volumes.

But enough! Proof, indeed, we have sufficient of the boundless wealth of those who have inherited the duties of the first Roman bishops. Our next task is the investigation of the manner in which this wealth was obtained.

* Hadrian's monument was completed anno 140, by the Emperor Antoninus, and was well worthy an emperor's memory. The interior was 150 feet in height, by 575 in circuit. The sarcophagus chamber was 24 feet long by 24 broad, and 32 high. The exterior was adorned with marble statues and columns. The transformation of the mausoleum into a fortress was early achieved; but in the frequent wars between the popes and their subjects, and both with the French and Spaniards, Saint Angelo was often sorely tried, and was even on several occasions almost destroyed. It has existed in its present form since the days of Boniface IX. and Urban VIII.

CHAPTER II.

BEGINNING OF PAPAL WEALTH—LEGACIES—INHERITANCE-HUNTING.

THE earlier bishops, even of the most important cities, were, as we have seen, but simple chief elders, having no distinctive privileges through their office,—for which they were alone indebted to their own more ardent devotion, which marked them out from among their fellow-believers. But men remain men merely despite the sublimest creeds. So it came to pass that when certain bishops for their individual piety were held in especial reverence by their flocks, many of their colleagues claimed the same honour as properly due to the episcopal office itself, not merely to the private virtues of the holder. When once this pretension became recognised, the official prerogatives of the bishops were soon established, and all spiritual equality among the members of the new faith was at an end.

It happened inevitably, even in the earliest Christian societies, sparsely scattered as they were through the world, that various differences of opinion in points of belief and discipline should grow up among them. To obviate the danger and disadvantage of this, synods

were instituted, at which, as it was impossible for all the members of the several churches to attend, their delegates held counsel, and, if possible, harmonised their differences, and kept their orthodoxy pure. The bishop or presbyter was usually chosen for this office; both as the man of most esteem in his church, and as best qualified in the knowledge of its customs and traditions. The honour voluntarily bestowed was soon assumed as a right; the synods fell completely under episcopal influence; their decisions were absolute, and without appeal for the communities represented; and the whole conduct of church affairs was engrossed by the bishops.

The primitive churches were zealously solicitous to retain no member whose piety was questionable, or whose conduct might bring scandal on the faith. Expulsion in such cases had originally been solemnly pronounced in a general meeting, where each member of the community voted. But as the members fast increased in number, it was soon impracticable for all to attend at such deliberations, which were transferred to the College of Presbyters, who, under the presidency of the bishop,* pronounced judgment on the offender. As soon as this first step was well secured, the bishop next renounced any further counsels from his colleagues, the presbyters, in the matter, declaring the right of expulsion (or excommunication) was vested in his office alone.

When the nucleus of a Christian community had

* We have before seen the bishops in this case were only called so to distinguish them from their brother presbyters, from whom they had been chosen to preside at the synodal councils.

been secured by one of the apostles, and its presbyter chosen, the apostle exhorted him to the pious discharge of his duties, and, after entreating God's support, laid his hands on the new teacher's head, to invoke a blessing on his labours. Bishops and chief elders followed the apostolic custom, claiming for it no mere typical meaning, however, but the actual descent of the Holy Ghost upon the person so ordained, sanctifying, and setting him apart from other men. Thus came the distinction between "clergy and laity*" into existence; thus was the idea of a Christian priesthood developed, and the more ambitious of its order soon gave their best endeavours to secure it a still greater breadth of development, adopting the pretensions of the Jewish rabbis, and all the privileges accorded by the Mosaic law to the sons of Levi. These assumptions remained of little importance whilst Christianity was still unrecognised by the Roman emperors.

Though here and there an ambitious priest might gain a brief notoriety, his pretensions, unsupported by any external power, were doomed to collapse, and die with him. But the moment of a great change was at hand. Constantine, the emperor,† was to be baptized

* "Clergy and laity;" both words are derived from the Greek, *laos*, common people; *kleros*, portion, or inheritance. The presbyters and bishops of the third century made especial claim to be God's peculiar portion (or priesthood), adopted a distinctive dress, generally a white stole, like that worn by Catholic choristers. Soon claiming peculiar exclusiveness, they demanded a reserved place in the churches, renounced all worldly trades and callings, and so were consolidated into a distinct caste.

† When Constantine was proclaimed emperor by the army in Britain (anno 306), the rival claimants to the purple, Galerius and Max-

by the hand of Sylvester, the head of the Roman church, and one of the most important revolutions in the world's history was effected by that typical sacrament. The days at last arrived when the harvest of power and wealth, long fondly dreamed of by many a bishop and presbyter, was to be triumphantly gathered in.

Already the chief elder of the Roman church had been regarded with great respect by the provincial communities, most of which dated their origin from Rome. Moreover, his church claimed especial dignity as of apostolic foundation, and that dignity was further enhanced by Rome's position as the metropolis of the civilized world. The assistance and counsel of the bishop of Rome was constantly sought in the neighbouring dioceses, or, when their spiritual chiefs met in synod, precedence was willingly yielded to him as the chief among his brethren. Any material advantage did not however result, until Constantine gave state support

entius, greatly endangered his rising fortunes. Happily, Galerius soon died; but Maxentius remained a very redoubtable opponent, holding, as he did, Rome, all Italy, and the East. Constantine managed however to secure the goodwill of the very numerous body of Christians throughout Italy, the priests giving their best influence in his favour. He crossed the Alps, defeated Maxentius, anno 312. During the battle the flaming cross and its inscription, "In hoc signo vinces," appeared in the heavens, and thenceforth Constantine bore on his banners the symbol of Christianity. The assistance of the Christians also secured the defeat of his later rival, Licinius.

Religion had but little part in the emperor's conversion, though his superstition might fear the consequence of the crimes he had committed. These crimes are too well known that we need delay to enumerate them; the murder of his wife and son will be in every reader's memory. But Constantine found piety an admirable political tool.—*See Burchardt's "Times of Constantine the Great."*

to Christianity. When the emperor allowed churches to be built, and granted privileges and lands to the bishops for the maintenance of the faith and its ministers, it is not strange that the bishop of Rome, whose hands had baptized the Cæsar, should secure as many favours as possible for his own see.

Bishop Sylvester, by the tact with which he managed his imperial convert, shortly procured not only a palace, to be constituted the episcopal residence in Rome, but the greater part of the money necessary for erecting a church there.

Gifts and legacies to the favoured religion received legal sanction; nor did the bishop hesitate to avail himself of it. Courtly example and expediency made the number of aspirants for baptism so great that Sylvester, his presbyters and deacons, could no longer keep pace with their accumulating duties, and he was obliged to increase the number of his first fellow labourers. His influence in Rome grew ever more powerful; donations to the church became the fashionable rage; and he, like his successors, found no little advantage in surrounding the young church with comely and eloquent exponents of its doctrines.

This policy, within twenty or thirty years, gave "father" Hieronimus occasion to write:—"The priests in Rome, who should command the reverence of women by their dignity and earnestness, now salute them with the kiss of fraternity in the very churches; yea, they stretch out their hands as it were to bestow benediction, but forsooth it is rather to receive the offerings of their flock." Other writers tell us, "the Roman clergy make it their especial business to be duly informed of any noble ladies, widows

especially, who may be accessible to "pious influences."* "Such ladies would then receive no lack of ecclesiastical visitors; and if one of the good fathers greatly admired any of the household appurtenances or pretty jewels of the mistress, what could she do but beg him to accept, in the name of the faith, the trifle which had found favour in his eyes."

If any showed unwillingness to part with their gear, the example of the more devout was preached to them, till for very shame they yielded. No Christian, rich in worldly goods, was suffered to die in peace at Rome unless the church, or rather the bishop and his priests, were well remembered in his will. Even the property of orphans was tampered with, until so notorious did the scandal become, that the Emperor Valentinian I. (anno 364) was obliged to enact severe laws against it. Damasus, bishop of Rome, was ordered to prohibit his clergy from receiving any gifts from those female penitents with whom they had passed from "the spiritual relationship to one founded on earthly love;" and, further: these "shameless priests" should be driven, with force, if needful, from the houses of the "infatuated" women who would rob their own children to enrich the bishops and their ecclesiastics. So few years it had needed to bring such great abuses into existence!

Offerings still poured in, despite imperial decrees; and by the latter half of the fourth century, scarce sixty years since the death of Constantine, the bishop of Rome lived in a dignity and pomp much more befitting a

* Rome then contained more than a million inhabitants, so that occult sources of intelligence was necessary to keep the priests informed of the private affairs of the faithful.

wealthy and luxurious earthly potentate than a spiritual teacher and shepherd of souls. The choicest viands, the richest vestments, the rarest steeds for their chariots, a crowd of servile attendants to do their bidding;—a bishop's staff summoned all these things into existence for the holder, whose court almost vied with that of the emperor's own. We can scarcely feel surprised when the governor of Rome, who was still attached to the old faith, replied, when his conversion was attempted, "Make me bishop of Rome,—I'll turn Christian directly." Contemporary writers declare this wealth had been procured, with little exception, through the devout offerings of the noble dames of Rome.* Therein lay the vital germ of papal wealth. The Roman bishops enriched themselves at the cost of right and justice, by the hands of their female penitents, who, amid the luxury and immorality of the fast-collapsing Western Empire, had often a heavy list of sins to atone, and were but too ready to make their peace with heaven, when earth had no more pleasures to offer, by a liberal bribe to the church.

But we need not imagine the greed of the priesthood, once awakened, would remain satisfied with such poor vanities as we have enumerated, or with even solid coin. Gold and costly jewels are pleasant things; but far more pleasant, because far more potent, are broad lands, fair cities, principalities, and royal prerogatives. We shall see how these also were at length secured.

* So says the good Hieronimus. A still more striking picture of the luxurious lives of the Roman prelates is given by Ammianus Marcellanus.

CHAPTER III.

TEMPORAL POWER OF THE PAPACY.

THE fable was once assiduously inculcated that the Emperor Constantine, in gratitude to Bishop Sylvester for baptism, bestowed upon him and his spiritual heirs all Italy and a great part of western Europe. But this assertion has long since been abandoned by the most fanatic defenders of the Pope's temporal power. Constantine and his successors held their sovereignty over Italy as jealously as any monarch in his own dominions; and regarded the bishop of Rome as a merely "spiritual," never as a temporal ruler, or as endowed with any of a temporal ruler's prerogatives.*

Constantine had, indeed, endowed the first Roman church with considerable lands, which naturally devolved to the care of the bishop. Other churches, arising in quick emulation, were provided for in the same man-

* The reader will remember that, from the time of Constantine to the reigns of Honorious and Arcadius, the sons of Theodosius, the emperors had almost abandoned Rome, paying but four visits to it in the long interval. Milan had been, during fifty years, the seat of government of the Western empire, when Honorius, fearing the incursions of the barbarians, who had already devastated Venetia, sought the greater security offered by Ravenna.—(*Translator.*)

ner; and it became a general custom to transfer the property attached to the temples of the ancient worship to those of its purer successor. The testamentary bequests of the rich and powerful soon added to these possessions; for a wealthy penitent might in vain hope for promise of salvation until he had mollified his spiritual adviser with a satisfactory deed of endowment.

Ecclesiastical property increased so rapidly that by the fourth century at least one-third of all the soil of Italy had been absorbed into it, and the clergy were rendered independent of the other classes of the community. The bishop of Rome was much the richest among his colleagues; at the commencement of the eighth century the lands annexed to his see (the Patrimonium *) extended far beyond Rome, into upper and lower Italy, Sicily, Corsica; even further, to Dalmatia, Gallia, and the very coast of Africa.

Constantine and the Christian emperor who followed him made it their policy to give influence and importance to the new religion, and its ministers, the better to crush the old faith on which the rival pretenders to the purple endeavoured to strengthen their claims. Chlodwig, the Frankish king, for the same motives, upon his conversion to Christianity, presented the bishop of Rome not only with a jewelled crown worthy a mo-

* The Roman emperors entitled their private property "patrimonium privatum," their imperial domains "patrimonium sacratum." This nomenclature was followed by the Church, whose possessions were also entitled "patrimonium;" and as a means to distinguish them, the name of the patron saint of the particular church to which they were annexed was added. Thus the property of the Roman Church was known as the patrimony of Saint Peter.

narch's brow but with a still more acceptable offering in the form of a handsome estate. When the Christian high-priests of Rome set their desires on certain lands* neither obtainable by gift nor legacy, other means were forthcoming to secure the prize: forged wills and fraudulent title deeds were had recourse to, as the lawsuits of the time abundantly prove. Yet these acquisitions, no matter how secured, still bore the character of mere private property;† the popes could only enjoy the usufruct without any right to alienate that which was entailed to the Church, nor could they lay claim to judicial authority within them, or any of the rights of temporal sovereignty. In Italy all such rights remained

* The German emperors of the west sent at stated intervals a supreme judge to Rome to hear any complaints brought by the people. In the time of the Emperor Lothair, Abbot Ingoald, of Farsa, in Spoleto, appeared before this high authority to demand redress for the five estates Popes Hadrian and Leo had deprived his monastery of, and for which act their three successors had likewise refused justice, declaring, "falsely and unjustly," that those estates "had always appertained to St. Peter's patrimonium." The judge investigated the abbot's plea in the presence of Gregory IV. and numerous bishops. His Holiness maintained the lands in question belonged to Rome, and exhibited documents in support of his assertions. Abbot Ingoald, however, produced the original deed of gift confirmed by the Lombard king. Gregory IV. boldly declared this title forged, and was ready to take an oath to that effect; but Abbot Ingoald was prepared with witnesses who could solemnly swear the monastery had previously held unquestionable possession of the property, of which Pope Hadrian had despoiled it. The supreme judge decided in favour of the monastery, and the pope lost his cause, and endeavoured in vain to recover it by a subsequent appeal to the emperor.

† Gregory I. mentions in one of his letters, the property by Marseilles produced him 400 gold florins annually, no small sum in those days. Gregory II. paid seventy pounds weight of gold ingots to the Duke of Naples for restitution of the Church property at Cumæ seized by the Longobardi.

with the Emperor; in Gaul, the civil jurisdiction over the patrimony of St. Peter rested with the Frankish kings, as the letters of Pope Gregory the Great clearly prove.

A great change was soon to be effected, for the Roman bishops well knew how to bend to their own service all the accidents of their time. We need not recall to the reader's memory the erection of Constantinople into a rival capital by Constantine (Anno 330), the subsequent division of the imperial dominions, and the final extinction of the western empire, with the fall of Romulus Augustulus, the last emperor: these things belong to secular history, and are beyond the scope of our present work. But from thenceforth Italy was split up into petty states, and the popes gave their best endeavours that it should remain so.

Their policy, the curse of Italy, was founded from the beginning, on the idea of securing the national impotence by parcelling out the country among petty princes, whose mutual jealousy it would be easy to excite to constant feuds, and thus, amid the general disorder, insure the richer booty for the Church. Upper Italy, after being overrun by successive German hordes, was at length, in the sixth century, permanently occupied by the Longobardi, who made Pavia their seat of government. Central Italy, Naples, Calabria, and the Two Sicilies (before they fell into the hands of the Saracens) had been held by the Greek Emperor, whose generals, Belisarius and Narses, had secured them out of the general wreck of the Empire of Rome. Exarchs from Constantinople held their seat of government at Ravenna, whilst the country around (the Romagna), per-

sonally administered by them, was called the Exarchate. Rome, during the troubles of the fifth and sixth centuries, lost more than nine-tenths of its population, and never recovered its earlier importance.

The number of its inhabitants, which under the emperors of the first and second century exceeded a million, sank during this period of continual anarchy to thirty-five thousand. Duces (sub-governors) were appointed to the once metropolis of the world, and to Gaeta, Amalfi, Naples, &c., which were thence called ducate. The five maritime cities, Ancona, Siniganglia, Fano, Pesaro, and Rimini, were especially distinguished as the Pentapolis, and were administered by a lieutenant of the Exarch of Ravenna. Thus by far the greater part of the peninsula was subject to the Byzantine monarchs, for the portion held by the Lombards was comparatively of small extent. But the Eastern Empire was doomed to crumble rapidly away from the weak hands of its rulers, whose vices and crimes, with but few exceptions, were exceeded only by their incapacity. The exarchs of Ravenna, left almost without any assistance from Constantinople, found their post a most arduous one, constantly called on as they were to resist the encroachments of the Longobardi, with no other aid but that supplied by the local population and great land-owners. The bishop of Rome was, perhaps, the most important member of the latter, and therefore peculiarly interested in the preservation of this part of the Imperial domains from the spoilers of Pavia. There was another motive for his efforts: so long as Rome remained under the authority of a

governor appointed by the exarch, the bishop not only felt his own importance secured, but that he could successfully arrogate powers by no means implied by his office. The exarchs needed the support of the bishop, and the emperors were too feeble, or too far removed, to heed the encroachments by which it might be accompanied. If, on the other hand, the Lombard kings could unite all Italy under their sceptre, dependence on a sovereign so close at hand would be far more irksome than the authority of an Imperial exarch and the temporal crown already dimly visible to papal imaginations for ever impossible. The union of Italy was therefore to be prevented at any cost, and the Roman bishops proved equal to the emergency. They offered no inconsiderable aid in money; they would raise soldiers, or gladly pay the troops which the emperor should send to protect the imperial dominions. It was in this crisis Gregory the Great (590-604) so much distinguished himself; his great intellect and iron will must claim our attention in a later chapter, they were indeed employed, with mighty results for the papacy. But such services were not to be rendered without a fitting equivalent: the papacy was true to its instincts; the conditions demanded were, that the pope should be invested with the full legal jurisdiction of his landed possessions; and the right of presentation to all civil offices within the patrimonium of the Roman episcopacy formally conferred on the Roman see by the emperor. But what best aided Gregory's plans was the confidence and good will with which he had inspired the people of Rome and central Italy by his spirited opposition to the Lombards, so that they much

rather looked up to him as their ruler and defender than to either the emperor or the exarch, from whom indeed no effectual aid ever came.

Another event, productive of the best results to the Roman Church, occurred during the pontificate of Gregory II. (A.D, 715-735), the outbreak of the controversy on image worship, the famous iconoclastic heresy, which was to cost torrents of blood, and result in the final separation of Italy from the Byzantine empire.

In primitive times the bodily representation of any of the Persons of the Trinity in places of worship would have been thought scarce less than blasphemous; Gregory the Great denounced the adoration of images as a grievous sin. But the masses of the population demanded some tangible object of adoration, and found inexpressible delight in the pictures of Christ, the Virgin, the Apostles, martyrs, &c. From this sentimental satisfaction the step was a very easy one to actual worship of the symbolical image; after a time this became so general, especially in the east, that by the seventh century pictures were devoutly kissed by devotees who kneeled to pray to them, and were piously convinced of their miraculous powers. Jews and Mohammedans laughed at the fetish worship adopted into the purest of earthly creeds, but it constantly spread wider and wider, and, finally, completely infected western Christendom. It was, however, in the interest of the clergy, especially of those of the regular orders, to encourage a practice which, whilst it fostered the use of the offertory, turned the people's thoughts from inconvenient reasoning.

The new polytheism became at length so great a scandal, that it roused the Greek emperor Leo (the Isaurian), to take vigorous measures for its repression. He issued a decree, commanding the removal of all pictures from the churches throughout his empire, and immediate discontinuance of their worship. The credulous masses felt cruelly wronged, and in many places (at the instigation of the monks) even rose in open rebellion; but Leo finally carried his point, at least in Eastern Christendom. A far different result awaited his efforts in central Italy, and especially at Rome, where Gregory II. (715-730), sat in St. Peter's chair, an energetic ambitious man, for whom any means were justifiable if they promised success. When the emperor called on the exarch of Ravenna to carry out the extirpation of image worship in the Italian provinces, the pope immediately and emphatically protested against the order. The exarch instructed the governor of Rome to proceed in defiance of Gregory, but as he himself had been left without support, he was quite unable to supply his lieutenant with the means which could alone ensure obedience; and the latter, after exasperating the people in a vain attempt to put the imperial law in force, was, after a sanguinary struggle, obliged to seek safety in flight. Gregory had the more easily gained this triumph by previously securing the sympathy of the people, through his opposition to a tax lately imposed on them from Constantinople, and then by spreading a report that assassins were sent from thence by the Government to attempt his life. The enthusiasm of the Romans reached its climax on the

expulsion of the governor, and they unanimously declared Gregory their temporal, as well as their spiritual ruler.

Thus, in anno 727, the goal of the bishops' longings was reached; but the triumph was not one of unmixed satisfaction, for not only were his estates and church patrimony in southern Italy, which was still loyal to the emperor, not only were these sequestrated, but a new danger presented itself. Luitprand, king of the Longobardi, a prince whose abilities equalled his daring, judging the right moment had arrived to unite all Italy beneath his crown, by driving out the feeble representatives of the Byzantine sovereignty, assembled his forces, marched on Ravenna, and made himself master of it, and five other important cities. King Luitprand affected to make common cause with the bishop of Rome; not only declaring in favour of image worship in emulation of his holiness, but presented him with a very handsome dotation,—the town of Sutri, in the province of Viterbo, and studiously treated with him as with an independent potentate. The pope, for all this fair seeming, was not deluded; he knew too well that if once the Lombards succeeded in their designs, in a brief period the bishops of Rome must bow to their authority, and acknowledge their own sovereign in the king of Italy. Gregory, therefore, had recourse to the Venetians, whose small, but independent republic, had alone in Northern Italy resisted with success the Longobard army. He obtained their solemn promise to support the exarch against this "mad horde of Longobardi;" and then contrived to foment a revolt among the vassals of Luit-

prand, who, exposed to the attacks of the Venetians, soon found his position in the exarchate untenable, and was obliged to abandon his conquests. Thus the threatened danger from the Longobardi was escaped, though the policy which brought success might not bear too strict investigation; but Leo knew well it was far better to have a helpless exarch for his neighbour than the redoubtable Luitprand.

Saint Peter's chair was next held by Gregory III. (731-741), who followed close in the footsteps of his predecessor. The disputes on image worship continued fierce as ever, the emperor employing his best efforts to put it down in Italy; but it was supported with so much the greater pertinacity by the pope, who, intent on securing the goodwill of the people, energetically set himself to the pictorial adornment of the churches. Leo had no army in Italy which could compel the refractory Roman bishop to submission, and the impotent zeal of the exarch was repaid with the ban of the church, and excommunication as a heretic.*

King Luitprand had in the meantime recovered from his late reverses, and was again becoming dangerous: So Gregory determined to secure safety by an alliance, defensive and offensive, with the dukes of Spoleto and Benevento, vassals of the Lombard crown. But here the acute prince's anticipations failed him woefully. Luitprand got wind of the secret treaty, at once marched with a powerful army against the dukes, defeated them

* We shall have to speak of the ban in a subsequent chapter ("Pope and Humility"), and of the manner in which the bishops of Rome were developed into popes.

after a desperate engagement, then proceeded into the patrimony of St. Peter, and laid siege to Rome, where his traitorous vassals had sought refuge.

The Successor of the Apostles was now in a very cruel strait; if Rome fell he must become a Longobard subject. Foreign help offered the only escape from the dilemma, as the Venetians now refused to involve themselves in hostilities with so redoubtable an antagonist as the Longobard king, and Charles Martel, the all-powerful Frankish "mayor of the palace," was the sole source from which that help could come. His conduct of the campaign against the Saracens had marked him out as the foremost soldier of his age, and to him, the actual arbiter of Gaul* and Southern Germany, the pope now dispatched three successive embassies (anno 739-40) to entreat assistance for St. Peter's representative (so Gregory styled himself), and the Roman church, against the Lombards. Charles Martel had already been brought into communication with the pope through Boniface, the apostle of the Germans, when the messengers arrived, who brought him indeed not entreaties merely, but many precious relics; among them some filings from St. Peter's chains, in honour of the alliance it was the pope's most ardent desire to secure.

The third embassy offered the perhaps more appreciable advantage of the pope's promise,—to renounce en-

* The Frankish monarchy then included the present kingdom of France, and the whole of Christianised Germany. The Merovingian princes wore the crown still, but their master of the household wielded the sceptre, just as the grand viziers of Turkey have in later times governed from behind a puppet sultan.

tirely all connection with Byzantium, and throw himself for the future entirely upon the protection of the Franks. "Charles Martel," wrote Gregory, "shall assume the patriarchate of Rome, the suzerainty of the eternal city, and henceforth hold the same position towards it as the Greek emperors formerly enjoyed." In authentication of these proposals, he sent the key of St. Peter's sepulchre to the great major domo, as the symbol of his future supremacy.

Nor could Charles Martel be insensible to so tempting a proposition, but his health was too broken for him to contemplate the toils of a campaign; and he was bound, both by duty and friendship, to king Luitprand. So he only offered his gratitude to the pope for honours he could not accept, and proved it, by at once dispatching an embassy to induce the Lombard monarch to raise the siege of Rome and suspend all hostilities "against St. Peter's representative." Charles Martel died shortly afterwards, and Gregory did not long survive him, expiring on the 27th November, 741, yet living long enough to see his episcopacy saved by the good offices of the Frank.

Zacharias (anno 741-52) succeeded to the papal chair. A man endowed with the most suasive eloquence, and a conscience free from any trammels imposed by honour or morality. Finding the sons of Charles Martel were too much occupied in their wars with the Bavarians, Saxons, and Allemanni, to render any present help, Zacharias sought a personal interview with king Luitprand, and so won over that redoubtable warrior by soft words and adroit flattery, that he not only obtained a

truce for twenty years, and the restitution of all the "patrimonium" of the apostolic see seized by the Lombards, besides the cities of Amelia, Orta, Bomarzo, and Binda, of which the exarchate had been despoiled,—the pope assuring Luitprand that, "as a conqueror may dispose at will of the spoils of his bow and spear, it were far better to bestow them on the church than restore them to an emperor whose territories were already quite large enough." Zacharias had not procured these concessions without some return; he was obliged to declare the treaty made by his predecessor with the dukes of Spoleto and Urbino false and dishonourable; to renounce all such attempts in future, upon solemn oath; and agree to send a certain number of the Roman militia for the reduction of Spoleto.

The Longobard peril was again circumvented, or at least deferred.

But the pope felt the advantages offered by this new treaty were balanced by still heavier disadvantages, and secretly endeavoured to establish a closer relationship with Pepin,—the only remaining son of Charles Martel. The Frankish alliance once mooted, it offered far too important a resource to be entirely abandoned. Nor was the good will of the pope of less value to Pepin, who, having succeeded to his father's office in the household of king Childeric, determined, with the pious aid of the bishop of Rome, to appropriate his master's crown. Some show of right was, however, necessary to smooth over the usurpation and foresworn fealty, in the eyes of the Franks. So a negociation was set on foot; and when the mayor of the palace and the successor of St.

Peter had secretly come to a mutual understanding, Bishop Buckhardt of Wurtzburg, and Abbot Fulrad of St. Denis, were publicly sent by Pepin to the pope to learn from his holy lips—"whether a weak, effeminate, and incapable sovereign, might not be deposed, and one more worthy, who should fitly understand the kingly duties, assume his place." Throughout nearly all Western Christendom, the bishop of Rome was then regarded as the final resort in all questions of conscience. As the assumed successor of Christ, to whom could the decision between right and wrong so properly belong, as to him? Thus much depended upon the answer Zacharias would give. Zacharias unhesitatingly made that answer in the affirmative, and solemnly set the seal of his authority to violence and usurpation. A more glaring infringement of political morality has never been perpetrated. Any general or prime minister, entrusted with the cares of war and government, might, by the same argument, declare his master incapable, and usurp the throne. But what cared Zacharias, or the greater number of his successors, for truth, or right? What cared they how robbery was justified, and perjury explained away with pious formulas, so that their own worldly advantage were but secured? as it pre-eminently was, by this "yes" of Pope Zachary.

The Longobards again grew menacing. King Aistulph, who succeeded to the iron crown in 749, declared publicly he would rest not until the whole peninsula acknowledged his sway. Within two years he conquered the whole exarchate and Pentapolis, and in 752 marched against Rome. Zacharias had died in the mean time, and Stephen II. (752-57) held the sacred keys. The

new pope immediately despatched messenger after messenger to Aistulph, to deprecate his advance; and at length, at a great cost of treasure, the king was induced to renounce his projects and conclude a peace.

In a few months, repenting his moderation, Aistulph demanded the recognition of his suzerainty by the bishop, nobility, and people of Rome, and the payment of a yearly tribute of one gold piece for each inhabitant. The old danger, so lately exorcised, was here again in its most threatening aspect; the pope seemed inevitably about to sink into the position of his earliest predecessors, and be like them, a bishop without either vassals or domains; but the result proved him worthy of the policy he had inherited.

With promises and entreaties he first applied to Aistulph himself, but the Longobard king would give no other reply, even to offers of large sums of money, than reiterated demands for acknowledgment of his suzerainty. Stephen then sent an embassy to the emperor Constantine V., with proposals to become at once the most devoted of his subjects, if the royal iconoclast would consent to save Rome and Italy in its present strait; but the Byzantine sovereign had not the means to fit out an army, though his wishes might never so well favour the project. The pope, when this resource failed, went in person to Aistulph's camp, and kneeling at his feet, entreated him to renounce his designs. But here again was only disappointment and humiliation. The King declared that if Rome still held out he would put the whole population to the sword. No course now remained but recurrence to Gregory III.'s policy,—reliance on Frankish help; and though the pope might anticipate

acknowledgment of vassalage would be the price demanded, yet, at the worst, vassalage would be far more easy to bear with a lord paramount beyond the Alps, than under a Lombard king who would in all probability at once designate Rome as his seat of government, and effectually eclipse all the dawning glories of the papacy.

Stephen knew that Pepin, whose courage and crimes, by favour of the papal benediction, had now firmly secured the Frankish crown, could not refuse his aid; for pope and usurper were mutually necessary to each other. Pepin, after deposing the Merovingian, had caused himself to be anointed* king by Bonifacius,† the "apostle of the Germans;" and as a devoted friend and servant of the church, was perfectly ready to undertake the holy work by which he might hope to cancel his past misdeeds. There were too many of his vassals troubled with misgivings as to the legitimacy of his title; and it was Pepin's object to set these tender consciences at rest by the good offices of the Pope. He declined

* The ceremony of anointing with oil originated in the East, partly as a means of strengthening the limbs, and partly as a specific for improving the complexion. It was a mark of attention never omitted in the reception of an honoured guest. The anointing, used by the Jewish priests both for their persons, garments, and utensils, was founded on this custom; and a peculiar oil was employed for the purpose, which sanctified everything it touched. The anointing of royal personages in early times had a peculiarly symbolical meaning: it was supposed to endue them with the imperishable sanctity of their office,—to render them inviolable and sacred. At ordinations, the palms of the hands are touched with the precious oil (chrisma). Anointing was employed in ancient Egypt.

† This infamy proved no bar to the subsequent canonization of Boniface, whilst the like honour was accorded to pope Zacharias, the original proposer of the perjury.

giving any definite reply to the legates, but despatched Bishop Chrodigang, of Metz, and duke Ancharius, to entreat the pope to pay a visit to his devoted son, the new king of France. When Stephen learned for what reason Pepin desired his presence, he at once consented to take the journey, anno 753, generously regardless of the discomforts involved by it in the cold of mid-winter. The king was so delighted by this ready compliance, that he not only rode out a considerable distance to meet the Holy Father, but dismounted from his steed and kneeled down, with touching humility, to beg his blessing. Then the pope kneeled in his turn at the royal feet, and declared he would not rise until he had received assurance of protection for the church. We need not linger over this pleasant little comedy; suffice it, pope and king came, ere long, to a mutual understanding: Stephen agreed to solemnly absolve his royal penitent from the perjury to Childeric III.; to anoint him, his wife Bertrade, and their two sons, with the sacred oil; and finally, to threaten the Franks with the ban of the church should they dare to elect another sovereign whilst Pepin or any of his descendants survived. Pepin, on his part, undertook to carry on war against the Longobards until he had secured the safety of Rome, and restored all the "patrimonium" to the chair of St. Peter of which they had deprived it. Further, that any other towns or territories he might conquer in Italy should not be given back to their original master, the Greek emperor, but made over to the pope and his successors, to be held as fiefs under the Frankish monarchy.

When the Longobards had seized the exarchate, the

pope, filled with horror, denounced them as lawless robbers; now, when the exarchate was to be again conquered, and made over to the Roman See, it was a blessed work, pleasant in the eyes of God and the saints.

The treaty concluded, it was soon brought into operation. The king, anointed and absolved by the pope in the church of St. Denis at Paris, speedily set about his part of the bargain, by marching over the Alps, at the head of a considerable army, into Italy. The ensuing campaign was a very brief one, for when once the Franks had cleared the pass of Fenestrella they pursued their way without further opposition, until, after besieging the Lombard king in Pavia, they obliged him to sue for peace, and Pepin consented to leave Italy only on condition that the exarchate and all the other Lombard conquests in the territories of the emperor should be made over to the Pope. Aistulph agreed to the transference, but only waited until Pepin had recrossed the Alps to break all his promises, and marched again on Rome to punish the pope for calling in foreign intervention. Stephen once more had recourse to his powerful friend, and sent off three embassies, one on the heels of the other to implore his immediate aid, entreating him by "heaven and earth" to root out these "lawless devils the Longobards;" and the last embassy to arouse the king and excite the people of France for the cause, carried an autograph letter from St. Peter, written expressly for the occasion, in which the saint commanded: "Pepin, the princes his sons, the Frankish nobility, and the Frankish nation, in the name of the Holy Virgin, the Thrones, Dominions, and Powers of

heaven, in the name of the Army of Martyrs, of the Cherubim and Seraphim, of all the Hosts gathered round the throne, and under threat of utter damnation, not to let his peculiar city Rome* fall into the hands of the hell-brand Longobards."

Pepin and his Franks dared not withstand such direct commands from On High, and in the summer of 755 he commenced his second Italian campaign, which ended more brilliantly than the former one. Aistulph was so completely humbled by the first battle, that he at once sought peace, and gladly consented to the terms offered by Pepin.†

Stephen recovered the possessions made over to him by the king of France the previous year; and from this moment we may date the temporal power of the papacy, whilst its maintenance and increase from thenceforth became of far more moment than the abstract interests of God's service or man's salvation.

On the defeat of Aistulph, ambassadors were at once despatched from Constantinople to demand the restitution of the exarchate and Pentapolis, but King Pepin curtly silenced such demands by declaring "he had not gone to war for the emperor, but for the blessed St. Peter, and therefore not only Rome, but the exarchate

* The Apostle thus makes official claim to Rome. This letter is still in existence; it is in Latin, which we are left to infer is the court language in heaven. In what manner the pope received the missive has never been specified, and we must leave the reader to resolve the interesting problem.

† Besides the exarchate and the Pentapolis, Aistulph bound himself to evacuate several other cities in favour of the pope, and to pay a yearly tribute of 5,000 gold florins to the Franks, with an immediate indemnification of 30,000 for the war.

and Pentapolis also, must remain in the hands of the pope." Pepin, as suzerain of Rome, claimed precedence over all other sovereigns, but he meddled little with the government of the Holy Father, nor did he again visit Italy, wars and intrigues in his own dominions keeping him effectually occupied until his death, anno 768.

Affairs assumed a very different aspect when Charlemagne ascended the throne. Having conquered Desiderius, king of the Longobards, anno 774, he subsequently made himself master of great part of southern Italy, when his dominions, including, as they did, all Germany, Gaul, and great part of Spain, were scarcely less in extent than those which had once constituted the empire of the West, whose departed glory he resolved to revive in his own person; and, as a preliminary step, caused Pope Leo III. to crown him emperor. From thenceforth all central and northern Italy was forced to recognise his authority; the pope was made responsible to him and to his representatives, and Rome governed by an imperial sovereign once more. Charlemagne thus achieved the position lost by the Greek emperors, and for several centuries the relations he established were more or less strictly maintained. The pope possessed recognised temporal power, but not an independent crown, and, until enfeoffed by his suzerain, could exercise no princely prerogative whatever.

Though the popes were obliged to forego sovereignty in the full meaning of the word, they had at least the indemnification of a royal revenue, and applied their best endeavours to swell it by every possible means. Our limited space will not allow us to enter into the

details of the papal finance system, interesting as they would be; we can only glance at its more notorious features, and the methods by which the later lands and lordships of the Roman see were obtained. The means used to secure the first step towards worldly power we have already seen in the papal blessing on perjury and usurpation, and we need not anticipate greater scrupulousness in their subsequent proceedings. The next great aggrandizement to the papacy was represented by the so-called Mathilda legacy. About the middle of the eleventh century, Count Bonifazio of Tuscany succeeded in possessing himself of almost royal territories. His father, Count Tedaldo, had held the cities and provinces of Modena, Rizzio, Tenere, Mantua, and Brescia, as a feoff from the emperor. Bonifazio, however, induced Kaiser Conrad II., in recognition of certain services, to grant him, in addition, the provinces of Tuscany, Parma, and subsequently the duchy of Spoleto and Camerino, besides numerous allodial estates,* which, like personal property, could be disposed of at the will of the owner, whilst with royal fiefs it was necessary that each successive feoffee should be invested by the sove-

* Allodial estates were held free of any feudal service in contradistinction to fief domains, whose possessors could only enjoy the fee simple, as the representatives of the suzerain. Allodial is derived from the old German word alod—good, and the landed property of every vassal, in the middle ages, was necessarily either feudal—held in charge for certain service to be rendered, or allodial. The latter descended equally to all the children of the holder; the former was, in most cases, entailed on the male line, as the conditions of tenure generally involved service in the field. When feudal and allodial estates were held by the same family for a lengthened period, the lands and titles became often so intermixed, that endless lawsuits were the almost inevitable result.

reign. The dominions of Bonifazio included a third part of Italy, and might well have justified him in styling them a kingdom rather than a mere duchy.

On the 7th of May, 1052, Bonifazio died, leaving his daughter Matilda, then nine years of age, sole inheritrix, with her mother Beatrix as regent. Matilda, whilst still a child, was betrothed to her young cousin Gottfried von Lothringen, her widowed mother securing the future alliance by wedding the intended bridegroom's father. But the heiress was afterwards so little disposed to fulfil the engagement made for her, that it was not until 1069 that she could be finally persuaded to have her marriage solemnized. Her aversion remained no less after the ceremony, and she refused to live with her husband, having indeed only yielded her hand to be freed from further importunity, by investing him with the imperial fiefs inherited from her father. This accomplished, she hastened to assume the government of her Italian possessions, over which she held almost absolute sovereignty, whilst Gottfried remained in Germany. The countess at once threw the whole weight of her power, the importance of which we may readily conceive, into the interests of the party at deadly feud with her husband and the emperor.

Two great factions in Germany and Italy had sprung into existence at this time; the one devoted to the imperial, the other to the papal interests.*

For two centuries imperialists and papists massacred, persecuted, and banished each other, each bent on the other's annihilation. We must leave the origin of the

* See book, "Pope and Humility," for further details on this point.

quarrel for a later chapter; for the present we have but to keep in mind that the two parties were now at the height of their mutual rancour.

Kaiser Henry IV., represented the empire, Gregory VII. the papacy; Duke Gottfried was the champion of the former, the Countess Matilda of the latter. The church against the state; the wife against the husband.

Why Matilda thus flagrantly renounced her duty as a wife is readily enough explained. She was the singularly dear friend of Pope Gregory VII., with whom she had lived on the most affectionate terms for many years, whilst he was still Cardinal Hildebrand.

Matilda's admirers would prove her not alone the most intellectual, learned, and amiable, but the purest and gentlest, the most lovely, courageous, and witty lady of that age; and we are far from questioning the first and last of these qualifications, or doubting her beauty, wit, and courage; but modesty and gentleness were scarcely consistent with long weeks spent in the camp, or with her achievements when she headed her soldiers in the field, or led them to the assault of the enemy's fortresses. She was, moreover, completely under the influence of Pope Gregory VII., whom she had known when he was still young, and afterwards spent months and years with him, in an intimacy impossible, under any other than their actual, but unacknowledged, relationship.

Gregory's portrait has been painted in the same ideal tints, but the aureole vanishes at the breath of truth. No man endowed with such rare mental qualities, such iron strength of will, ever employed such monstrous,

infamous means to effect his purposes, or secure his power, and such a one could surely have no great claim to peculiar sanctity.

Pope Gregory and Countess Matilda were proverbially spoken of as the "inseparable pair," during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries; and we may suppose Hildebrand was indebted for his influence over the fiery Italian dame to his intellectual superiority, though both pope and countess were ruled by their passions. Matilda, when a widow, and in her forty-sixth year (anno 1089), married a lad of eighteen, whose father, the duke of Bavaria, might have been a far more suitable match for this favourite heroine of the papal historians.

When Pope Gregory was staying with the countess in her castle of Canossa—that same Canossa where Kaiser Henry IV. had to endure sore degradation and shame—he induced her to make a will (anno 1077), by which she devolved the whole of the possessions, at her own disposal, to the see of Rome. She was enabled to gratify His Holiness in this particular; her youthful husband having died during the previous year, and leaving her childless, she could dispose of all her private and allodial property as she might think best.

Being childless, the fiefs she held would, of course, revert to the emperor at her death. Over these she had no power; but the actual legacy made in favour of the papacy, and for love of its representative, was indeed no trifling one, and Gregory might well rejoice at his success. He could justly hope she would not contemplate any change in the precious document; indeed Matilda,

who no longer had the temptations of youth, solemnly promised him, "who was all in all to her," never to wed again, but die in her widowed state. Yet his anticipations were well nigh frustrated. Matilda endeavoured to arrange a marriage with the young duke Welf of Bavaria, and as she could not hope to tempt him by her faded charms, promised to secure in his favour the reversion of her imperial fiefs, and to constitute him sole heir of all her personal and allodial property.

Gregory had been scarce two years dead, when the marriage actually took place, and the lady who has been held up for the world's admiration as the most virtuous and modest of her sex, thus bought a husband who might more naturally have seemed her grandson. Urban assumed the papal tiara in 1088, and sore was his perplexity and fear that the noble inheritance was about to pass away from the church to this upstart young Welf. He rested not until, after some trouble and great public scandal, the countess was induced to send both her husband and infant son away to Bavaria. The old duke Welf, enraged beyond measure, at once marched into Italy, and demanded the immediate surrender of her domains to her husband; but whilst she held possession she cared little for his indignation, and the old duke, for the moment at least, gained nothing. But the claims he and his son had obtained by the latter's marriage, were fated to excite a war which lasted with varying success for more than two hundred years.

Urban well knew the game he had to play when he induced Matilda to discard her boy husband, and in a

short time had so well employed the ascendancy he had gained over her, that she executed a second testament (the original one had disappeared after her marriage), by which she once more devolved the whole of her possessions to the successors of St. Peter. This last will was even more favourable to the church than the first had been. By it (for so it might be interpreted, and popes have singular talents for interpreting to their own advantage), she bestowed, not only her allodial property, but that also which she held in fief, and over which she had no legal power of alienation. From this time Matilda remained faithful to the papacy, which had realised that for which its chiefs had so anxiously planned and plotted, for which Gregory VII. had lived in politic adultery, and Urban II. would have despoiled a child of its just inheritance.

Then succeeded all the falsehood and misrepresentation adopted by the succeeding popes to justify their claims through this equivocal parchment. The policy by which the first favours of Pepin were obtained became traditional. Still the popes dared not openly assert their right to the spoils they had won. Matilda died, July 24, 1115, at her castle of Bondano dei Ronconi, near Reggio, and the reigning pontiff, Pascal II., not only did not demand the inheritance left to the church, he did not even produce the testament regarding it, and took no steps whatever to carry out Matilda's pious intentions. The emperor bestowed the great fiefs among his adherents, chiefly German nobles, and Rome made no sign, uttered no protest.

Seven years* later, when Pope Calixtus signed the Concordat of Worms with the emperor, anno 1122, His Holiness spoke no word of the will made by the countess, or of the claims the church might justly found on it. Indeed, a doubt has arisen, shared by many modern historians, whether such a deed ever existed at all. Let this be as it may, it is historically certain that first on the death of Henry V. (1125), Pope Honorius II. (1124-30) found courage to publish demands founded on this mysterious legacy. How he dared take this step is easily explained. The successor of Kaiser Henry, Lothair, duke of Saxony, owed his elevation to the imperial throne to the three prince bishop electors, and still more to papal influence, and was thus in no position to defend the interests of his crown with the same energy as his predecessor. Yet, notwithstanding all the compliancy and goodwill of Lothair, the pope could not wholly succeed in his designs.

In 1133 a compromise was agreed to by Innocent II. (successor of Honorius), by which the allodial estates left by the countess were declared church property, whilst the fiefs she had held were to continue at the emperor's disposal. It was, however, found so difficult to determine to which category a great part of her lands belonged; during her long life the various tenures had got so hopelessly involved, that to avoid a recommence-

* The wars between the papacy and the empire had never ceased since the time of the emperor Henry IV., when Gregory VII. asserted his claim as supreme head of Christendom. (See chapter "Pope and Humility"). And no peace was possible until one or other of the disputants was overcome.

ment of the disputes, it was finally settled the pope should resign all his claims for an indemnification of one hundred silver marks, to be annually paid by the emperor. It was further agreed that on the emperor's death, his son in law, Duke Henry of Bavaria and Saxony, should take the estates on the same conditions, but that on his decease it should revert to the papacy.

This treaty was carried into effect, and thus Matilda's domains remained for some time in the hands of the Welfs, who, moreover, might claim them as her legitimate heirs, duke Henry being the brother's son of her second consort. Duke Henry died in 1139, and the old strife threatened to be re-opened. But Kaiser Frederick Barbarossa* was minded to be master of the situation, trusting to his own strong hand and iron will for success. As he had been principally indebted for his elevation to the imperial throne to the son of the above duke Henry (also called Henry, and surnamed "the Lion"), and his brother, Welf VI., he proceeded to invest the former with the dukedoms of Bavaria and Saxony, of which the old duke Henry had been unjustly deprived; and the latter with Tuscany, the dukedom of Spoleto, and all Matilda's allodial estates. Pope Hadrian IV., 1159, protested loudly against this, and demanded both the allodial lands and the dukedom of Spoleto as church patrimony, but he very shortly died, and his successor, Alexander III. (1159-80) entered into the same arrangement with duke Welf, by which Lothair had held the disputed territories. The only son of Welf VI. died anno 1167, and Henry the Lion became heir

* Made emperor in 1152.

presumptive to all Matilda's possessions. Welf VI. had extravagant tastes, and after the death of his son indulged them more recklessly than ever. His revenues soon proved quite insufficient to satisfy all the courtiers, adventurers and jugglers, who thronged his court. Made at length quite desperate by ever-growing debts, he applied to his wealthy nephew, Henry, offering to formally appoint him his sole heir, and even immediately abdicate in his favour, on condition the "Lion" would assume all his liabilities and allow him a yearly pension. Henry declined the proposal, having no lionine acquisitiveness. Then Welf had recourse to another nephew, the emperor Frederick; he of the red beard grasped eagerly enough at so tempting a bargain, and Matilda's lands passed, 1168, to the Hohenstaufen.

We may well believe these family arrangements were not viewed with great satisfaction at Rome. The efforts of all the later popes had been directed to the consolidation of a temporal sovereignty; their policy,—never to yield anything they had secured. It mattered little how nefarious the means might be, so they aided the pious work. What cared they, though interminable wars should involve Italy and Germany alike in misery and ruin, until utter political chaos seemed the inevitable fate of both. They, the mighty magicians, had invoked the anarchy, and could triumphantly await the throne they had resolved to raise upon it.

With Innocent III. (1198-1216) came the great turning point of the papal destinies. As despotic, ambitious, cunning as any of his predecessors, none had exceeded him in resoluteness, patience, and knowledge of man-

kind.* Kaiser Henry VI. died in 1197, leaving his infant son, afterwards the famous Frederick II., to the guardianship of his uncle, duke Philip of Suabia. The Duke had been entrusted by his late brother with the management of the imperial affairs in Italy, but immediately left for Germany to support the claims of his ward as well as the general interests of the Hohenstaufen at the ensuing imperial election. The field was thus left free for Innocent; and he at once employed his opportunity, and boldly demanded the whole territory held by Matilda, imperial fiefs, and allodial lands alike, taking measures to secure them by the strong hand if necessary. The fiefs, as we have said, had long since reverted to the empire, Henry VI. bestowing Spoleto on Sir Conrad of Urlingen, Anconia on his seneschal Marquard, and Tuscany on Sir Conrad of Lutzenhardt. The whole inheritance had fallen to Germans; and this fact enabled Innocent to master all his three opponents in detail with so much the greater ease. He commenced with Marquard, first pronouncing the ban of the church against him; then declared his subjects released from their oath of allegiance, and called on them to rise and drive out their foreign masters. He spared neither money nor men in assisting the rebellion; and the seneschal having no adequate forces was obliged to give up the contest and seek safety in Apulia, when the remaining cities of the Romagna he had received, fell one after the other, either in the autumn of 1198 or the spring of 1199, into the hands of the pope. Innocent had still less difficulty with Sir Conrad, duke of Spoleto, who, finding the whole

* Son of Barbarossa.

of his Italian subjects opposed to him, and his German troops too few to afford any effectual resistance, avoided useless bloodshed by at once yielding to the pope's demands and absolving his vassals from their fealty. Now Tuscany alone remained to be secured, when all the disputed inheritance would be at length united beneath the papal crown. But from Tuscany pope Innocent was forced to stay his hand; for on the death of Kaiser Henry, the more important towns had united with the Italian feudal seigneurs, driven Sir Conrad of Lutzenhardt from Florence, and concluded the famous "Tuscan league," which had for its object the confederation of all the people of Tuscany against their foreign oppressors. Innocent concluded it were better policy to form a close alliance with the confederation, rather than to attack it, since he might thus secure allies who would stand by him and his throne if a struggle came with the Emperor. Whilst these events were taking place in Italy, the Germans were occupied with the election of a new Emperor. There were two candidates for the crown:—Otto, of Saxony the Welf duke, and Phillip of Suabia, who claimed it as regent during the minority of his brother's son. The former was supported by the bishop electors, who acted under the direction of the papal legates; the latter by the temporal princes. Innocent instructed his legates to ingratiate themselves with the Welf, and promise him, under certain conditions, the whole weight of the papal influence; or, if he declined those conditions, then threaten to give their good offices to Phillip.

Otto readily grasped at the bait; for he had too much reason to fear his cause would be hopeless, unless sup-

ported by the strong arm of the church. On the 8th of July, at Reuss, near Cologne, the following compact was made between Otto and Innocent: the pope undertook to ensure the duke's election, and the latter solemnly swore to "uphold and protect, to the best of his power and understanding, all the rights and possessions of the apostolic chair; to leave in its keeping all its acquisitions of the past three years; and to aid, to the full limit of his power, in recovering in its behalf the remaining portion of the countess' legacy."

The "possessions" referred to included the whole district between Radicofani and Ceperano, the former exarchate of Ravenna, with Pentapolis, the Romagna, the dukedom of Spoleto, all Matilda's allodial lands, the province of Bertinoro as well as the districts adjoining, with which Kaiser Ludwig, the pious son of Charlemagne, had endowed the church. Of this last endowment nothing had been ever heard till then; yet the legates produced all the proper documents to substantiate it in legal form, bearing date anno 817. According to these venerable parchments, Louis the Pious had made over to the Roman See the whole of southern Italy, with Naples and the Two Sicilies, though, in 817, all the country so bestowed was still in the possession of the emperors of Constantinople. Thus, if the deed produced were genuine, Louis had given away part of another sovereign's territory,* and might as well have

* Naples, Gaëta, Amalfi, all Apulia, Calabria, Sicily, and the small islands off the coast, forming the kingdom of Naples of later times, belonged, until 1016, to the Byzantine empire. Then came the Norman invasions, which, by the close of the eleventh century, gave the *coup de grâce* to the power of the Greek sovereigns in Italy.

included Constantinople, or Asia and Africa, in the same deed.

Indeed the spuriousness of the document * was glaring enough, but historical criticism was little known in those days, and Otto's interests might, perhaps, prevent him being inconveniently sceptical; and thus Innocent crowned the work at which his predecessors had so long laboured. The formal cession signed by Otto provided a legal basis for the claims of the Church on the dominions in question, or would do so, so soon as Otto should be anointed emperor.† History proves how well

* The Roman church, even in the days of Charlemagne, had distinguished itself by the cultivation of forgery. The great emperor imprisoned a legate from Pope Hadrian I., convicted of falsifying evidence. The deed of gift by Louis the Pious is no longer defended even by the apologists of the papacy.

† A fierce quarrel sprang up between Otto and Phillip which the holy father carefully fomented, for so long as the Germans were at feud with each other they would have no armies to spare for Italy, and thus the peninsula could lie open for the papal operations. Innocent excommunicated the rival of his champion, but Phillip soon made such flattering proposals to the pope that the quarrel was settled, by arranging that Phillip should wear the imperial crown during his life, and Otto immediately succeed him without re-election. Phillip did not long enjoy his honours, being murdered in 1208; and Otto, anno 1209, ratified at Spires all the promises he had entered into at Reuss eight years before. He repented, when too late, and endeavoured to recover by the strong hand that of which the pope's wit had so shrewdly tricked him; Innocent retaliated by setting up Frederick, son of Henry IV., who was now of age, as a rival claimant to the empire, though not until he had recognised all the terms originally agreed to by Otto. Otto was vanquished by Frederick in 1214, and the latter was shortly afterwards crowned by the hand of Innocent himself. Yet the new monarch was scarcely seated on the throne before he too applied himself to regain all he had bargained away, and then arose the terrible wars between "Imperium and Sacerdotium," racking Germany and Italy to their very centre, and ended only in 1275 when Kaiser Rudolph of Hapsburg confirmed Christ's vicegerent

the scheme was planned. Innocent III. may be regarded as the chief founder of the temporal sovereignty of the Church, though by what perjury, forgery, and bloodshed, the reader has sufficiently seen. The bishops of Rome were now invested with royal prerogatives and royal revenues; shall we find their subjects happier than those of mere temporal rulers? Were the most fruitful provinces of Italy, of all Europe, perhaps, blessed with prosperity and good government under the successors of St. Peter—the vicegerents of heaven? A fearful irony is in that title; we might rather call the wearers of the triple crown vicegerents of sin and the father of lies. The vassals of the most irresponsible despot had never greater cause to protest against the misery inflicted on them by their rulers than those of the holy father. Not only do modern historians and ancient chroniclers bring proofs irrefragable of this, but the very writers most devoted to the papacy unconsciously corroborate them; though it is unnecessary we should occupy our limited space with the details,* we must briefly glance at the causes which rendered the papal rule (with how few exceptions) so essentially evil. We cannot, of course, suppose the popes systematically employed themselves in making their people wretched; yet the explanation of such a result may be readily found. The whole system of the temporal power of the bishop of Rome was founded on false principles from the first moment of its

in the possession of those domains assured to the church by Otto IV. From henceforth the popes held fast that which they had so boldly won.

* Rankes's History of the Popes sufficiently illustrates the condition of the papal states during the middle ages.

existence, and will remain so to its last. The popes have always appointed priests to every important office of state—men, therefore, unfitted by their whole training and education to their duties. The very minister at War, must be at the same time a minister of the Prince of Peace. The lay subjects of His Holiness had to bear the whole weight of the taxation from which the priesthood, though possessing far the greater part of the land, were wholly exempt, and, to fill up the measure of this injustice, ecclesiastics accused of any offence against the laws, were only answerable to an ecclesiastical tribunal.

How heavily this exemption weighed on the rest of the community may be illustrated by the following circumstances, which occurred in the thirteenth century. The city of Fano (anno 1217) was under the necessity of repairing its walls, but was so ill provided with funds for the work that it was obliged to call on the monasteries and rich benefices to contribute some small part. The bishop of Fano immediately prohibited any of the clergy under his authority from submitting to the tax. The city then refused to supply its ghostly comforters with any kind of food, and for three weeks bishops and priests had nothing to eat but lentils and gray peas. The citizens even went further, taking a solemn vow to hear neither mass nor sermon from the bishop until his grace had yielded the point at issue. Regardless of the ban he hurled at them, they socially excommunicated him as it were, and he was finally starved into submission, for the moment at least, but only for the moment, for means were shortly found at Rome to bend the stiff necks of the men of Fano; but we may conceive how

irritating must have been an abuse which could thus excite good catholics into daring the thunders of the church. For centuries a more complete social disorganization and perversion of justice prevailed in the states of the church than in any other civilized country; security of person or property were blessings undreamed of; robbery and murder went unpunished, whilst the interests of education, of manufactures, or agriculture, were words never heard within the Vatican.

The Romans gained one thing by the papal government—Rome became the capital of the Christian world, and, partly through the luxury of its court and partly from the multitude of strangers constantly arriving, money was always plentiful in the city. Yet, despite this advantage, the preponderating evils were so great that the citizens were always in a state of chronic rebellion, and would have eagerly emancipated themselves from a yoke at once detested and degrading. Volumes might be filled with the story of their ever-recurring insurrections, but we must content ourselves with a few examples from those in which the very principle of the temporal power was the object of attack.

The first instance we shall cite (for the earlier ones had been of comparatively slight importance) took place in 1142, when the Romans not only renounced their obedience to Innocent II., but declared Rome an independent republic, and proceeded to elect a government under the time-honoured title of a senate. Leo, "patricius Romæ," was appointed president by his colleagues, and represented the city in its home and foreign policy; the chief difficulty was to oblige the pope to give

up not only his political dignity, but the state revenues, and make him and his clergy content themselves with their tithes and the free-will offerings of the faithful. Innocent could not survive so cruel a hardship, and died of vexation in 1143. His successor, Lucius II., resolved to make short work with the revolution, and, having gathered an army together, attacked the capitol, the seat of the republican government. His attack was repulsed, and he himself so severely wounded, that he expired in a few days afterwards, on the 15th of February, 1145. Eugenius III., who next sat on St. Peter's chair, had no better fortune in bringing back the refractory Romans, though he made his escape from the city and secured Norman aid, his "blinded vassals," as he called them, commanded by Arnoldo of Brescia,* declared that as the apostles had possessed neither land nor lordships, so neither did it beseem their successors, the popes, to claim such things.

The Romans even invited Conrad III. to take up his residence in Rome, declare it the capital of his empire, and reduce the popes to the dependent position they had held during the earlier centuries. The Kaiser did not accept the proposal, and his successor, Frederic Barbarossa (1153), even offered to reduce Rome to obedience for the pope, in consideration of being crowned there by the hands of his holiness. Two years later he fulfilled his offer; but scarcely had he left the city when the people rose again, and Alexander III. (1159-81) could only by the sacrifice of no small treasure obtain

* We shall have much to say of this celebrated heretic in a later chapter.

permission to return,—November 23rd, 1165. The Romans only gave their consent on condition the senate should be maintained in full authority, and the civil administration of the city entrusted to lay officials, chosen by the citizens. The peace lasted but a short time. The next pontiff, Lucius III. (1181-85) aroused the resentment of his subjects, and was obliged to make his escape and seek safety at Aquila, when, despite ban and interdict, Rome declared itself completely independent, and was never re-entered by him. Its gates remained as inexorably closed to the two following pontiffs, Urban III. and Gregory VIII. Not until May, 1138, was a reconciliation effected; when Clement III. promised to uphold the senate, which was subject to annual election; and that one-third of the revenue should be set apart for the requirements of the city. "Order" remained unbroken under Innocent III., whose firm will not only prevented any revolt in his own dominions, but made nearly the whole catholic world bow at his footstool. Under his successors, Honorius III. (1216-27), and Gregory IX. (1227-41), the Romans again rebelled and declared Rome independent. In 1252 the famous senator, Brancaleone degli Andolo, a man as distinguished by his birth, wealth, and mental endowment, as for his courage and incorruptible honour, accepted the government, and Innocent IV. was obliged to submit himself to the senators' authority, or see the gates of the capital for ever closed to him. Never had Rome enjoyed a better or more liberal government; never had justice been more impartially administered,—though the priests unanimously denounced it, and the

popes have found no words strong enough to characterize their trials in those days. All the privileges and immunities of the clergy were suspended; monastery and church property made to contribute, like all other, to the public requirements; priests were no longer entrusted with the administration of justice, and could not indulge in vice or crime with impunity, as of old, when they had felt raised above earthly responsibility. The pope was forced to promise, on oath, that neither Rome nor any one of its citizens should in future be subjected to excommunication. Of course, secretly, every means were tried to overthrow the terrible Brancaleone,* and this object was nearly attained, by an insurrection contrived and fomented by the priests; but the Romans repented their ingratitude before it was too late, and Alexander IV. (1254-61), the successor of Innocent, after excommunicating them and their great senator, was but too glad to save himself by taking refuge at Viterbo. Twelve years after Brancaleone's death Alexander's successor, Clement IV. (1265-71) secured readmittance, and, thanks to Charles of Anjou, reduced the rebellious Romans to submission. But that submission was but due to overwhelming force; scarce a century, scarce a single generation passed away without the sorely-tried vassals of the tiara either forcibly driving the pope out of Rome, or compelling him to forego his temporal power for a greater or less period. Such were the sentiments of the Romans towards their ruler, that they

* So impartial was the justice dealt by Brancaleone, that he condemned to capital punishment two cousins of the pope, convicted with other nobles of robbery and rapine.

eagerly seized every chance that offered escape from their servitude. Then, as now, no man perhaps but the priests and their creatures, but would have regarded with unspeakable satisfaction the Holy Father's abdication of his worldly crown.

With such a state of feeling prevalent, the popes were necessarily obliged to guard their kingly prerogatives with foreign aid; and to Swiss mercenaries was entrusted the sacred person of the pontiff and the safety of his fortress St. Angelo. Rome had to submit to military rule from a soldateska, bringing with it the strange customs and strange speech of another land. When a long course of weary oppression stirred the population to resistance, and fortune favoured the cause of the oppressed, the popes could always have recourse to Spain or France, or to the Hapsburgs, to bring back the "misguided" vassals of the papacy to their former "happy obedience." Thus, little by little, Italy was involved in impotent anarchy,—made bankrupt, body and soul. We cannot wonder that the most intelligent men the country has produced should declare the papacy from of old, "the curse of Italy." But the successors of the apostles could afford to laugh at their detractors whilst their own revenues and power were secure. Gold, gold, and still more gold, was their unvarying cry, and the more they obtained the more insatiable grew their greed. Soon the revenues of the papal states became insufficient for their requirements; and then another source of supply was found, which even proved more fruitful than the pope's home fiscal system, productive as it was. We will now investigate in detail this financial discovery.

CHAPTER IV.

PETER'S PENCE.

THE conversion of the kingdoms included in northern Europe was principally accomplished by Roman missionaries about the close of the sixth or commencement of the seventh century, under the auspices of pope Gregory the Great. Thus these kingdoms fell into a peculiar dependence on the bishop of Rome,—the dependence of a spiritual colony on its mother church; and it is not surprising they felt especial devotion to the capital of Christendom, and expressed it by frequent rich offerings to its spiritual chief, who, on his part, failed not in pious exhortations to the continuance of so excellent a practice, and was never weary of holding out his hands for the gifts of the faithful. From these voluntary oblations, assisted by the persevering efforts of His Holiness for more and still more, a kind of annual revenue grew up; year by year the demands of the popes were anticipated and supplied by this means, until, by papal tact and courage, the custom was moulded into the institution of Peter's pence.

We find the first indication of this Peter's pence in the eighth century, under the Saxon Heptarchy in Eng-

land. King Ina of Wessex having made a pilgrimage to Rome, established there (in England there were no educational establishments for the higher branches of learning) the so-called Scolia Saxorum, and an hospital for poor English pilgrims. "So at this opportunity," say the papal chronicles, "there was taken into consideration a yearly tribute, and King Ina promised in the name of himself and his successors, the dutiful establishment of Peter's pence." The truth of this tradition has been much questioned, and with very good reason; but whether true or false, it is certain that seventy years after this supposed origin, we find Peter's pence a firmly rooted institution, as a letter from Pope Leo III. (795-816) to Arnulf of Marcia sufficiently proves. In this letter Leo states that King Offa of Wessex (who died 796) had promised a yearly offering of three hundred and sixty-five marks (a heavy silver coin of the period) for lighting St. Peter's church, and assisting the poor in Rome. Whether this was actually given we have no positive information; though when King Ethelwolf, the father of Alfred, went to Rome, anno 855, he carried three hundred marks with him as a present for His Holiness, and from this date we find constant reference in the Anglo-Saxon annals and statute books to this Peter's pence, as a yearly religious tribute. Under King Edgar (anno 950) it was called a *denar*, and collected from every householder, under heavy penalties, on St. Peter's day.

Peter's pence (what we have already instanced sufficiently proves) was originally a free-will offering, partly for St. Peter's church, and partly for poor English pil-

grims in Rome. It soon became, however, a compulsory tax, assessed on every free Englishman possessing houses or land over the yearly annual value of thirty pence (denari).

Pope Gregory VII. (1073-86), he who first grasped the full capabilities of the papal crown, and laboured so effectively for their development, declared this pious donation was in reality a political tribute, and thence proceeded to prove England a fief royal of the church.

He demanded from William the Conqueror not only the "customary 300 marks which had been annually furnished during many centuries," but also the king's oath of fealty, boldly asserting England had been since the earliest times "a tributary kingdom of St. Peter." The assertion had no support, but a gross forgery; but in the ignorance and anarchy of those times the pope might hope to effect his purpose. The keen witted Norman replied, however, "he should hold it his duty to make the customary pious oblation, but that no English king had ever taken oath of vassalage to a pope, nor would he ever consent to do so." So England continued to furnish Peter's pence, but took good heed never to sink into political dependence on Rome. The popes imposed on the English prelates the responsibility of securing the tax; the prelates transferred the duty to their archdeacons, and these devolved the charge to their subordinates, who went from house to house, sparing no one from whom by fair or foul means the money could be extracted; for if ghostly persuasions failed, they had recourse to the arm of the flesh, and thus found no great difficulty in making a satisfactory annual return.

This revenue naturally greatly increased with the growth of the population, and became at last so immense that it even considerably exceeded the king's own. It appears, however, from the complaints made by the popes, that much of the proceeds failed to reach their coffers; indeed, after some years, more than half never got beyond the hands of the archdeacons, and their immediate collectors. No blow ever fell more cruelly on the papacy than that by which the rich stream of Peter's pence was suddenly stayed in its course in England, and dried up for ever.

Its end came from Henry VIII., who, when the fair Boleyn found favour in his eyes, applied to Pope Clement VII. for the necessary divorce from Queen Catherine. The pope at first exhibited the greatest willingness to meet the king's wishes, and sent Cardinal Campegius to England with the divorce in his pocket; but Charles V., a near relation of Catherine, interfered, and Clement dared not offend him whilst the Reformation in Germany was still unsuppressed. So he directed Campegius to flatter Henry's hopes, but to destroy the important document.

The trial dragged on year after year, until King Hal lost patience, and made Archbishop Cranmer pronounce him free to marry again, then broke off all connexion with Rome, abolished Peter's pence, and every other tie to the papacy.

So ceased the tax which England had paid century after century for its conversion; a tax which had yielded millions, and the loss of which could scarcely be made good by any financial ingenuity.

Nor was England the only country which furnished "Roman tribute," or "Romfeod," as Peter's pence was also called; over the whole of northern Europe, the profitable institution had been successfully extended. Denmark, from the eleventh to the fifteenth century, conscientiously supplied its annual quota, and Poland especially bound to Rome, (for Pope Benedict. IX. had in 1034 dispensed King Casimir* from his monastic vows on the death of his elder brother), also contributed. Prussia was to have been equally favoured. Pope John XXII. charged the archbishop of Gnesen, and the bishop of Breslau (1320), with the preliminary arrangements; but the whole country, with the sovereign at its head, was in opposition to the measure; and though the papal claims were urgently renewed in 1343, 1348, and 1445, they had no satisfactory issue; the tribute, though occasionally allowed, was never formally recognised. The popes fared better in Sweden, where the cardinal legate, Nicholas, afterwards Hadrian IV., induced the synod of Trincoping to declare the papacy had full right to levy the Peter's pence. Norway was equally docile; even Iceland, and the Faroë Islands, were drawn into the fiscal net; and though the population of the latter was so sparse and poor, coin was frequently totally unknown to the inhabitants, this was compensated by their being allowed to pay the tax in kind—in furs or walrus teeth;† nothing, indeed, was despised at the Vatican that had the smallest exchangeable value. Spain and France both obdurately refused

* Second son of Miecislaws II.

† Dentes de roada, as they are called in the Vatican account books.

to be cajoled into a like generosity, though Gregory VII. strove hard to prove that Charlemagne himself had established Peter's pence there for the service of the church. The sovereigns of both countries remained incredulous. Though documentary evidence enough was forthcoming in support of the papal claims, they refused any and every concession which could bear any relation to "Roman tribute." The same opposition awaited his holiness in Germany; though there the voluntary offerings sufficiently indemnified him for the absence of the legal tax.

With the Reformation came the total extinction of the Peter's pence, as a compulsory enactment; yet so much the more eager have the popes become for its voluntary bestowal; and whenever the papal treasury falls short, recourse is always had to the denarii of "good Catholics," to save the apostolic throne from insolvency.

How many millions have not thus found their way to Rome? But let us proceed to the investigation of another source of wealth: one far more prolific, perhaps, the most prolific, ever invented by financial ingenuity.

CHAPTER V.

THE YEAR OF JUBILEE AND PLENARY INDULGENCE.

A YEAR of Jubilee and Plenary Indulgence: what a magnificent conception! If we but consider that from Germany alone, without taking into account the rest of western Europe, at least a third of the whole currency found its way to Rome under the spell of those few words, we may easily acknowledge the result of the invention might well exceed any estimation we can now form of it. During the earlier centuries of Christianity we have seen it was the custom to solemnly expel any member from the communion of the faithful who had been guilty of crime, or whose conduct might bring reprobation on the church. The expulsion was effected by the votes of the members of that particular community to which the offender belonged. A person so expelled could not be restored to his spiritual privileges until he had sufficiently proved his remorse; as his sins were more or less grievous, so were the penances imposed for them. Some notorious sinners had for years to entreat the forgiveness of their fellow-believers at the church door, and there make public confession of their evil deeds; others, again might hope for speedy restitu-

tion when they had, kneeling contritely, acknowledged their wickedness.

These public penances were soon found very distasteful to penitents, who greatly preferred confiding the troubles of their consciences to their bishop or presbyter in private, and then privately fulfil the atonement he should impose.* The majority of the bishops were well pleased to encourage this new form of confession, their own dignity and importance gaining greatly by it. From these private acknowledgments of sin grew the institution of oral confession, and from the private penances enjoined the whole system of canonical penal discipline,† which were fated to bring a complete revo-

* Private confession probably first originated in the fact as well from the scandals arising out of public confession, and the natural shame so inseparable from the latter. In consequence, about the year A.D. 250, the office of penitentiary presbyter was created, to whom private confession was first made. But this office, and with it the practice of private or "auricular" confession, was suspended throughout eastern Christendom A.D. 390, in consequence of a gross instance of their abuse. Nectarius, bishop of Constantinople, to appease the public indignation, deposed the offending priest, and at the same time abolished the office and custom.—*Translator.*

† Private confession was first practised in the east. Leo I., and still more Gregory the Great, introduced the practice into the Latin church, and the latter pope imposed the oath of secresy on the priesthood. Innocent IV. changed the name to oral confession, penitents having to whisper their sins into the ear of their spiritual adviser.

The sacrament of penance as it has gradually developed, consists of three integral parts: "attrition," confession, and satisfaction; the last is, of course, the chief object in view, and is imposed by the penitent's confessor generally under the form of alms, fasting, prayers, pilgrimages, voluntary suffering, and scourging, and other such "opera satisfactoria," "reconciliatory works" prescribed as "censuræ ecclesiasticæ" ("church penalties"); frequently, at the discretion of the priest, offerings in money to be applied to "bonæ operæ" ("good works") are substituted.

lution not only in individual communities but through the whole Christian church.

As in the early times of public acknowledgment of sins, when the penalties incurred were frequently remitted in favour of sick or feeble persons, so afterwards the bishops assumed the right of either annulling or modifying the penances incurred, or accepting fines in commutation of them. The latter modification was frequently made in the case of wealthy persons, who were thus enabled to make their peace with Heaven by merely liberally drawing their purse-strings in its service.

By the fifth and sixth century we find abundant evidence of canonical penances changed into money fines. The priesthood soon found the advantage of cataloguing those sins which could be thus redeemed, and definitely settled the mulct to be rendered for each. Toward the end of the seventh century, Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, compiled a work, in which the various crimes and misdemeanours are classified, and their respective fines added in proper order. Thus early was the sin catalogue and tax table* organised, nor was it

All punishments inflicted as works of satisfaction can be commuted by an indulgence.

[It is not generally understood that by contrition, which arises from the love of God, and a sincere repentance and a hatred of sin, the church of Rome teaches that the sinner becomes reconciled to God without the sacrament o fpenance, but she alleges so few attain to this perfection of repentance, that in pity she steps in and makes up what is wanting by means of "attrition," which she defines to be an imperfect repentance, that is, a repentance arising from the fear of punishment and Hell, by which, with the sacrament of penance, the sinner becomes reconciled to God.]—*Note by Translator.*

* The earliest catalogue of the kind now known is that entitled "Theodori cilicis Pœnitentiale." An improved edition of this, under

allowed to fall into desuetude; such atonements proved by far the most advantageous to the church, or rather to the priesthood, who, moreover, could from time to time enlarge the fines as occasion might suggest, and so carry out the original plan to its full perfection. So came indulgences into existence, that is, the remittance of canonical penalties, and substitution of money fines in their stead. We have now to discover how the popes contrived to secure to themselves the chief moiety of the produce, though each priest possessed the right of mulcting repentant sinners.

We have already considered the causes which gave the see of Rome so preponderating an influence throughout western Christendom; it was regarded as the sacred mother church, whose words her spiritual offspring were bound to reverence, and for whom St. Peter and St. Paul had laboured and died. There, too, were gathered the precious relics of Christ and his apostles; so many were these, especially after Jerusalem had fallen into the hands of the Saracens, that no other city in Europe could vie with the capital of the papacy in such pious treasures. The importance of the Roman See had grown year by year, until, in the eleventh and twelfth century, the popes were the acknowledged vicegerents of Christ upon earth. It was no wonder that vast mul-

the name of "The Mirror of Confession," was prepared by Regino, abbot of the Benedictine Monastery of Prüm. Later, under John XXII., appeared a "Taxa cameræ seu cancellariæ apostolicæ," and a new and improved edition of this in 1514, under Leo X., in his "Regulæ constitutiones, reservationes cancellariæ S. domino nostri Leonis novitæ editæ." The last improvements to the sin tariff were effected in 1744, in the pontificate of Benedict XIV.

titudes of people went every year to Rome to behold the metropolis of their faith and its sacred ruler. No wonder that thousands upon thousands of pilgrimages to Rome were undertaken, that by prayers in its favoured temples penitents might win forgiveness for their sins. Though every priest was empowered to grant absolution, absolution seemed something far different when accorded by the chief bishop of Christendon.

Year by year papal supremacy rose even higher in men's esteem, and consequently the value of the forgiveness offered by the lower clergy was proportionately depreciated. The popes willingly enough fostered this tendency of public opinion, and shortly claimed the sole power to grant remission from "sin against Heaven," and decreed not only temporal and ecclesiastical penalties for them, but assumed the power of annulling the very sin itself.*

* The respect in which papal indulgences were held was enhanced especially by three things: by the crusades, when all who entered on the holy war received full and complete remittance of all backslidings and crimes, a remittance far more precious than the pardons granted by the bishops for individual misdeeds; by the doctrine of purgatory, that middle region between Hell and Heaven where souls are doomed to torture or set free by papal intervention, secured through the payment of certain sums for masses and wax tapers, [the doctrine of purgatory was promulgated in the sixth century, and first publicly recognised by an ecclesiastical council held at Florence, 1439;] and, thirdly, by the doctrine of the supererogatory works accomplished by Christ and his apostles. Rome declared a single drop of Christ's blood would have sufficed for the salvation of mankind; and as He had bestowed it all for us, an inexhaustible treasure of redemption had been created. The saints, also, had accomplished far more than was necessary for their own salvation, and over this inheritance, called "Thesaurus meritoriæ, superabundantium Christi et sanctorum," the successors of St. Peter had full power of disposal; Clement VI., 1342, constituting this claim an article

Intent on carrying out these assumptions, they proceeded to endow various churches in Rome with peculiar virtues, by which the pious visitants, after making the stated offerings in hard coin or more or less contrition, were at once accredited with certain remittances drawn upon purgatory. As these boons increased, so were the recipients multiplied, and it became customary to visit in succession all the salvation-working temples, praying, and, above all, paying at each. St. Peter's, on Christmas eve, always boasted the greatest throng of devotees, as his holiness endowed the cathedral with quite exceptional powers on such occasions.

Pope Boniface VIII. (1294-1303) availed himself of these circumstances; and the growing belief throughout Christendom, that the wearer of the triple crown was the only certain mediator between heaven and earth, to institute an absolution, *en masse*, and thus became the inventor of the Great Year of Jubilee, which was to bring uncounted millions into the papal exchequer.* The reader will, doubtless, recal the great centenary festival kept by the Romans †,—their Ludi Sæculares,—

of faith. The celebrated theologian, Raimundus, first discovered or invented this dogma in the twelfth century.* The popes having such inestimable stores of good works thus funded for distribution, it naturally ensued that the bishops could but poorly compete with them in the popular favour.

* The Jubilee was also named the "Great Absolution Year," the "Great Year of Grace," the "Holy Year." The last title is still employed. Its fittest was, perhaps, the "Gold-bringing Year," "Annus Aurifer;" for no richer gold stream had ever existed in the world.

† It is possible that Boniface had also the Jewish year of jubilee in his mind, which, after every seven times seven years, had been solem-

* Mosheim attributes it to Thomas Aquinas.—*Trans.*

when, during three days, the gods were propitiated with sacrifices and the people amused with public games. Pope Boniface studied history to good effect, if this heathen festival suggested to him the idea of announcing that in the year 1300, he should hold a Great Year of Indulgences; and that all persons coming to Rome, who for fifteen consecutive days visited the churches of St. Peter and St. Paul, would receive a full and complete remittance of all their misdeeds. This absolution was to be without any exception, even for the worst sinners, who by it might be purified from every taint of crime. He further ordained, that all penitents residing in Rome or its immediate neighbourhood might enjoy the same privileges, on condition of continuing their pious visits to the churches during thirty instead of fifteen days; and, finally, that this great jubilee should take place once every century. The Great Year thus offered the whole world an opportunity of slipping out of its sins, and starting afresh,—pure as an infant just sprinkled with baptismal water.*

nized. But the Hebrew celebration was of a totally different character to the "Year of Indulgence." Moses ordained that all debts should be annulled, after every fiftieth year, slaves declared free, and all engagements cancelled; and thus effected a kind of communism. The papal jubilee had, on the contrary, no political tendency, only a religious or financial one, and was originally fixed for once only in each century.

* The pope declared in his Bull, announcing the Jubilee (we translate literally):—"It is proven by ancient traditions, that those persons who might seek the venerated church of the chief of the apostles at Rome, received thereby great pardons and indulgences; and as we are most heartily concerned for the eternal salvation and welfare of mankind, which is in the charge of our vicegerency, so we herein fully consent to the said indulgences and pardons, authorise them by apostolic power, and re-establish them. And for the glory of God, and the honour

Pity that the idealism of the sacred festival was so coarsely at variance with the results. Alas! Boniface thought very little of the "glory of God," or the "honour of His apostles," when he invited all Christendom to Rome: but he had discovered a new means of serving the carnal instincts of his office, the ambition of his family, and his own love of notoriety. He appointed the commencement of the Jubilee on Christmas eve, to thus perpetuate the anniversary of his election; and, during its continuance, exhibited himself to the assembled thousands, dressed in robes of imperial purple; attended processions, preceded by attendants bearing two great swords of state, and solemnly exclaimed as he went: "Behold, O Peter, thy successor! and Thou, Thy vicegerent, O Saviour of the world!" We have the evidence of two contemporary witnesses on the material advantages resulting to the church from the Jubilee.* Villani the historian, considered that not less than 200,000 persons were present at its opening; and cardinal Capitan estimated the gifts, in copper coins alone, placed in the crypts of St. Peter's and St. Paul's, as amounting in

of His two holy apostles, which may be attained the more fully the more often the chief churches at Rome are visited by believers, so we, in the present year of grace, 1300 from the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in every successive centenary thereof, do ordain, by the mercy of Almighty God, by the council of our brethren, and in the fulness of apostolic authority, not only a full and entire pardon for all those who shall devoutly seek these churches, but accord to them a further plenary indulgence for all sins they may subsequently commit," &c.

* About 1,200,000 pilgrims visited Rome during the first Jubilee; and as each was bound to stay at least a fortnight that the pilgrimage might have its proper effect, we may form some conception of the business and bustle there must have been in hostelry, hospital, and private house, that year.

value to 50,000 gold florins. If the pence offered by the poor amounted to such a sum, what must have been the total, with the gold and silver of wealthy believers? We can feel no surprise the succeeding popes found a centenary jubilee far too long deferred; and that Clement VI. (1342) diminished the interval to fifty years: his holiness remarking,—"man's life is but a span, and few can hope to see a hundred years." The second Jubilee took place in 1350, and proved even more fruitful than the earlier celebration. Between Christmas and Easter 1,000,000 pilgrims entered Rome; from Ascension day to Whitsunday, 800,000; and 300,000 during the later months. The profits to the princes of the church were enormous, so that pope Urban VI. (1378-89) felt that even fifty years was too long, and suggested that thirty-three, as representing the age of the Saviour, would be much more fitting. He ordained the periodical pardoning, therefore, to be held every thirty-third year, but died before one could be celebrated. It fell, in 1390, under his immediate successor, Boniface IX. (1389-1404), who had the pleasure of welcoming among his other illustrious visitors, the wealthy Count Serravon, with his train of four hundred retainers. The same pope Boniface kept the fourth Jubilee (in 1400), the centenary of the first; and again the eternal city was as fully thronged with pilgrims from all corners of the earth, though but ten years had passed since a general absolution. Unhappily, a plague broke out, which daily carried off seven or eight hundred persons, and this soon put the pardon seekers to flight. The fifth Jubilee took place under Martin V. (1423), at

thirty-three years from the last. The sixth, under Nicholas V. (1450), at fifty years. But some disorder threatened to arise in the varying length of these intervals, to the injury of the admirable speculation; and Paul II. (1464-71) settled that, from henceforth, the Jubilee should be celebrated every twenty-fifth year; and this rule held good up to modern times. The seventh anniversary was held by Sixtus IV., 1475; the eighth, in 1500, by Alexander VI.; the ninth, 1525, by Clement VII., &c., &c. Nor was war, nor any other circumstance, allowed to cause a postponement. The number of pilgrims varied very slightly, except during the epoch of the Reformation and during the Thirty Years' War; and though kings and queens were not always among the visitors to the wonder-working shrines, as in 1475* and 1675, yet monarchs sent ambassadors extraordinary in honour of the great event, and people of the highest rank mingled, *incogniti*, with the devout crowd, which included, in 1650,† not a few Protestant nobles and anti-Catholic personages of note.

A glimpse at the manner in which the year of Jubilee was kept at Rome may well detain us for a moment. Announcement of the coming anniversary of Plenary Indulgence was made by special Bull, published through-

* In 1475, king Ferdinand of Naples, Christian of Denmark, queen Carola of Cyprus, and Catherine of Bosnia, were of the number. In 1675, queen Christina of Sweden, then newly converted, was present at the opening of the festival, devoutly kneeling by the side of Clement X.

† In 1650 (that is, just at the close of the Thirty Years' War), the number of pilgrims were estimated at 3000, among whom were many German, English, and French princes and nobles, who, notwithstanding their heresies, were very welcome to the Romans, as they came with well-lined purses.

out Christendom some months before the celebration commenced. In Rome the Bull was always read on Ascension Day, from a pulpit erected for the purpose in front of St. Peter's, with joyous accompaniment of drums and trumpets. On the following Sunday the glad tidings were repeated in all the chief churches of Rome; and in all the public squares there were copies of the Bull affixed in Italian and Latin. A few weeks later the pope sent a "Bull of suspension" to the Catholic bishops of Christendom, by which all absolutions were declared void during the year of Jubilee, except those pronounced at Rome; all special power of indulgence granted to particular churches was also withdrawn for the same period, so that no one could entertain the hope of saving the expense and trouble of the journey, by making their peace with heaven at home. When the faithful had thus been forewarned, all kings and sovereign princes were commanded to take heed the roads towards Rome were in good condition, and save from robbers and evil disposed persons who might endanger the peace and safety of the pious travellers. At the same time the pope issued the very important commissariat directions, that the capital might be sufficiently supplied, that no famine should await the million strangers soon to be gathered in it. Besides, private speculators would be sufficiently awake to the advantages promised by so vast a harvest; long ere appointed day all the city and its neighbourhood became the scene of the busiest excitement and preparation.

The opening of the Jubilee always takes place at early vespers on Christmas eve, the 24th December. The

pope, followed by his cardinals in full state, proceeds from his apartments in the Vatican to the Sistine chapel, where he is met by all the prelates and higher clergy, with the chief civil dignitaries of Rome. As he enters, thousands of wax tapers are lighted, and he prostrates himself before the host, and chants the "Veni Creator Spiritus," whilst the choir gives the responses, then is formed the most imposing procession the world can exhibit. In front, a priest chosen for his majestic stature, bears aloft a gigantic cross; he is followed by hundreds of the singers and musicians of the papal chapel; then come the government officials, the senate, foreign princes and nobles, royal ambassadors, ambassadors from grand masters of orders and brotherhoods (such as the Maltese, &c.), and the cardinals and clergy, all in their robes of highest state, and bearing thousands of wax candles and censors. At length the pope himself appears, wearing the triple crown, sparkling with a thousand gems, a heavy diamond cross upon his breast, and a ceremonial robe of inestimable value. Sixteen black robed attendants bear his silver sceptre—type of his temporal sovereignty; he himself is carried aloft on a throne, like some dread eastern sultan; a canopy is held over his head, and—ever and anon he gently motions with his right hand, when the multitudes on either side kneel reverently in the dust to receive his blessing. Slowly and solemnly to the monotonous chanting of the choir the pope advances towards St. Peter's, the largest of churches, within whose walls 50,000 penitents may obtain standing room; but, behold, every entrance to the

holy precincts is fast closed, and the gate through which the vicegerent of Christ should pass, inexorably walled up: walled up with veritable stones, so that ingress seems an impossibility. This particular door, from the purpose to which it is devoted, is called "The Sacred," or, frequently, the "Golden;" perhaps from the gold crown which adorns it, or perhaps because more money is brought through it than passes across any other threshhold in the world. As soon as the pope arrives here he descends from his throne, and at once seats himself on another placed in readiness near the "Golden Portal."

When the Holy Father has recovered breath, and exhibited himself to the people for a little time with a great wax taper in his hand, he takes a silver gilt hammer from an attendant, and after a short prayer, pronounced on his knees, the successor of St. Peter advances to the walled entrance, strikes the first blow on it, chanting, "Open unto me the door of righteousness." The choir replies:—"That I may enter, and give praise unto the Lord." The second blow is dealt, the pope chanting "I will pray unto Thee with humbleness of heart in Thy holy temple;" he raises his hand for the third blow, and as it descends chants "Open thou the gates, for the Lord is with us;" and with the voice of triumph the choir replies:—"The Lord God of Israel hath given the victory;" at the same moment the stones that blocked up the entrance fall down—pulled down, in fact, by unseen masons within, who at once set to work, and clear the rubbish out of the way. The pope again seats himself, and chants, "O Lord hear my prayer."

The choir, "And let my supplication reach unto Thee." The pope, "The Lord be with you." Choir, "And with thy spirit."

When the masons have finished their operations, the Holy Father kneels and prays; the choir immediately commences the hundredth psalm, "Praise the Lord all ye lands," whilst the pœnetentiarii* advance, bearing holy water; with which to wash the threshold, and every part of the now open "Sacred Portal." This process requires some time, so it is piously employed; the pope chanting "This is the day of the Lord." Choir, "Let us rejoice on His day." Pope, "Blessed are the people." Choir, "Who rejoice." Pope, "This is the gate of the Lord." Choir, "Through which the righteous enter." The pope then pronounces the following prayer:—"O God, who didst command Thy people Israel, through Thy servant Moses, to keep sacred the year of Jubilee, graciously grant unto us Thy servants that we may worthily begin this present year of Jubilee, which hath been instituted by Thy authority, and for which Thou hast been pleased to open this portal for Thy people, that they may enter to make their supplications unto Thee, and as we remit all their sins, so in the same grace, when our day of reckoning cometh, may we attain to eternal joy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

When the Holy Father has concluded this prayer, a crucifix is presented him, and he advances through the holy door, chanting the "Te Deum," the whole choir

* The pœnitentiarii are the "conscience guardians" of the bishops. The pope has his especial "conscience guardian"—the grand penitentiary, who is always a cardinal.

immediately joining. He has scarcely entered, when a company of throne-bearers, dressed in purple robes, advance towards him; he takes his place on the velvet-covered chair they carry, and is then solemnly borne to the foot of the high altar; then descending, he sinks on his knees to pray, rises, takes his place on the throne which has been erected for him, and chants the vespers which are sung in every Roman Catholic church on Christmas eve. At their close the ceremonies for the day are over, and the pope, accompanied by all his clergy, returns to the palace, to repose after his devout labours.

In such solemn wise is the great Jubilee inaugurated in St. Peter's; the same ceremonies—opening of the "sacred portals," &c., take place in the three other principal churches, St. Paul, St. John Lateran, and Santa Maria Maggiore, with the sole difference that instead of the pope, three cardinals, especially empowered by him, handle the silver-gilt hammers, and open the mystic gates; in one word, repeat the part performed by his holiness.*

Strangers have thus full opportunity to witness the solemnity; and, indeed, pious ceremonials and endless processions occupy the whole year, for how else could

* Boniface VIII. instituted these ceremonies only at the churches of Sts. Peter and Paul. Clement VI. (1350) added the third principal religious edifice, St. John Lateran, and Urban VI., Santa Maria Maggiore. All four were distinguished during the year of pardon by a gilded door. Later popes have added three other churches, where, during the blessed period, plenary absolution may be secured: Holy Cross (Santa Croce in Gerusalemme,) St. Lorenzo, fuori delle mure, and St. Sebastiano (alle Catacombe). Thus there are seven churches where humanity may clear off all its sins during the Jubilee, though only four of these have a "golden portal."

all these devout penitents occupy themselves but in going from church to church, and lingering wherever a religious celebration was offered to their attention. What else had the pope, the cardinals, all the clergy of Rome to do but put in practice all the fascinations of the clerical toilette, and constantly prepare new allurements to bring the backsliding children of men into the fold, to induce even more visitors to come, and make those already there, unwilling to depart. Among the various attractions offered in the capital of Christendom were some of a nature we dare not venture to particularize, though we may observe, in parenthesis, that no fewer than a hundred thousand ladies light o' love on some occasions found their way thither, alas! not for repentance merely; and in no less number were the vagabonds, beggars, sharpers, gamblers, and pimps, who were naturally loth to lose their chance of gleaning, when the church gathered in the harvest; thus pilgrims, who had occupied the day in prayers, confession, almsgiving, bead-telling, and such pious exercises, was at no loss to find relaxation from them in the evening.

> "In Rome you may buy both Heaven and Hell,
> Clerks, and priests, and bishops as well,
> E'en the meek nun hid away in her cell!
> Who'd buy, who'd buy, let him hither wend,
> Though the bargain I trow will prove bad in the end."

All the processions and festivities draw to their conclusion as the following Christmas approaches, and on the same day of the month, the 24th of December, on which it commenced, the Jubilee is brought to a close. Again, a vast procession moves from the Vatican to

St. Peter's: again, thousands of wax tapers and censors flame or smoke before the sacred relics and holy pictures, the Holy Father extends his right hand in benediction over the multitude, and the closing nearly reproduces the inauguratory ceremony, only its intent is reversed, and the "golden door" is walled up instead of being opened. The procession, with the pope at its head, after vespers have been sung, proceeds to the sacred portal, where mortar, sand, and stones lie in readiness. The pope sprinkles the materials with holy water, —perfumes them with incense, then, tying a white cloth round his waist, takes the silver trowel from the Grand Pœnitentiary, solemnly lays three stones, sprinkles them with mortar, then places a casket with coins and medals in the newly-commenced wall, and seats himself on the throne whilst the masons proceed with the work, and the choir sing the 122nd and 127th Psalms. When the wall is finished the pope blesses the people, and accords them plenary absolution once more; intones the "Te Deum," then returns to his palace through the thousands who line the streets to witness the last act of the Holy Year—the Jubilee is over.

Thus was the famous year of pardon kept at Rome in earlier times, and as none of the multitude of pilgrims, beggars or vagrants not excepted, ever presented themselves with empty hands, and thousands brought half their fortunes with them to be spent on this supreme occasion, so we may well imagine how richly the Romans profited by it at the cost of the devotees,* and

* "Men and women (says the devout Catholic Vinzentius, 1451) are utterly ruined on the pilgrimage to Rome; those who went forth honest,

how many thousand scudi were deposited at the offertories to be safely transferred to the pope's exchequer.

Once in twenty-five years might well seem too seldom for papal patience; indeed, would not an annual jubilee have best suited the tastes of St. Peter's representatives?

The present "benevolent" pope has actually reduced it to six years. He announced a jubilee for Nov., 1851, and his last in Sep., 1857.

Happily, the Holy Fathers had tact enough to make the twenty-four, apparently condemned to barrenness, not less profitable than the twelve months so especially favoured. However great was the multitude that sought Rome in the "year of pardon," and though the popes seized every excuse for instituting an "extraordinary" one,* there were yet many of the faithful who were unable to go to Rome, however much they might long for the privileges offered them there. As these penitents were often able to pay well for remission, it would have been too obdurate to have left them in their sins:

returned with honesty quite lacking; and all family interests suffer great injury. Many there are who abandon their professions, or crafts, or husbandry, to the sore loss of their households, which are full oft brought to beggary. The while they pretend to serve God, they waste their time in idleness and folly to the damage of themselves and others. So monstrous hath this infatuation grown, that women secretly quit their husbands and children, or flee from their parents, forgetting all the duties imposed by God and nature, to pursue a shadow which shall ruin them body and soul."

* Paul III. decreed an extraordinary year of Jubilee, in 1542, in honour of the Council of Trent. Paul IV. (1555), for the re-establishment of the Catholic religion in England; a third was held by Gregory XIII. (1572), to celebrate the Bartholomew Massacre; and Paul (1617) offered one to the Catholic world, because the Protestants were celebrating the hundredth anniversary of their heresy.

Clement VI.* (1342-52) ordained that any person who could not conveniently visit Rome, might still enjoy all the advantages of the pilgrimage on paying to the secretary of the papal exchequer the same amount that the journey would have cost when made in a style befitting the giver's rank;—a bold idea, and a most successful one; for many of those who sat in high places were willing enough to supply themselves with plenary absolution from the pope,* when it was merely a question of taxing their subjects for it.

Kings† and high potentates eagerly sought these "letters of indulgence," though their price was right royal; but such letters were given not to the great ones of the earth alone, Rome would have scorned such an injustice; all men were equally enabled to avail themselves of the boon. Pope Boniface IX. (1389-1404) despatched, in 1391, special collectors to every Christian kingdom with powers to grant all persons who, through sickness, urgent business, or other causes, might be prevented from attending the Jubilee that year, a full and complete absolution on receipt of a sum in fitting accordance with their property or yearly income. So sprang up the traffic in indulgences; and how great were the profits of the new speculation we learn from

* This exemplary pope, who claimed equal authority in Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell, directed, in a Bull published for the occasion (cum natura humana"), that the angels should immediately bear the souls of those who died on the way from Rome to Heaven without any delay in Purgatory, "for the Holy Father would not suffer that the very least among the pilgrims should endure the slightest pain from the fiery purification."

† The monarchs of England and Portugal, for example, in 1390.

a contemporary witness, the pious historian Theodor of Vienna: "Like sea robbers, the papal pardon mongers plundered Christendom, and no one, not even the most notorious sinners and evil livers, were refused absolution. Every crime could be annulled at a fixed price, not only without penance, but even without a promise of repentance; and if a man or woman had no coin withal to close the bargain, the pardoner would contentedly go off with horses, or pigs, cattle, or sheep, yea, even household chattels, by way of payment." No more profitable business could have been contrived by human ingenuity; many provinces, not a fourth of the papal states in extent, were thus made to yield 100,000 gold florins annually. Pope Eugenius IV. (1431-47), according to the testimony of Francis Duarenus, his contemporary, drew in one year 200,000 crowns from France alone. How great, then, must have been the amount derived from the other states of Europe, especially devout Germany?

The Popes were naturally anxious to systematise this pardon traffic, and so they established a special ministry for its superintendence. Calixtus III. (1435-58) took the first steps thereto, and succeeded in effecting the necessary measures, by the assistance of deacon Martin da Fregeno, whom he appointed General Commissioner of this branch of the revenue. Martin had the true inspiration of genius in his profession: dividing Europe into various districts, the pardon-buying capabilities of each being tabulated according to previous experience, he farmed each district to a "Commissioner of Pardons" (generally a bishop or archbishop), either for a

fixed yearly rental or for the half or third of the net proceeds. The commercial celebrities of the time (such as the Fuggers of Augsburg), when willing to give better terms than the ecclesiastical speculators, or when they had out-standing claims on Rome, were often allowed contracts for the pardon-supply of one or more provinces. The Pardon Commissioners entrusted the disposal of their merchandise to subordinate priestly agents, entitled "Pardoners"* (*indulgentiarii*), and generally chose men whose broad humour and utter shamelessness might have made their fortune as itinerant quacks and mountebanks.

Benedictines, Dominicans and Franciscans, proved the most apt for the business; many among them acquired no little notoriety, by their skill in drawing the coin from their penitents' pockets. The manner in which the pardoners announced themselves was characteristic enough; and great was the inventive power they developed in pushing their trade. When any one of them proposed visiting a city, he sent a servant in advance, to announce his coming to the higher civil and ecclesiastical authorities, and inform them of the day and hour of his arrival. No little rivalry would ensue for the honour of first welcoming the distinguished guest, who indeed might anticipate a very brilliant reception and the most generous hospitality. Priests, monks,

* The *indulgentiarii* were generally as lax in the observance of the seventh commandment as in all the other decencies of life. Many among them were accompanied by professional prostitutes, or travelled in company with a favoured mistress, and various "nephews and nieces." They were jovial companions at drinking bouts or any kind of revelry, and owed to this great part of their influence with the lower classes.

nuns, burgomaster, town councillors, heads of colleges and their scholars, and especially pious womenkind of all classes,—went forth, singing hymns of rejoicing, with flags waving and tapers burning, to welcome the forgiver of sins, whilst the armed citizens lined the road by which he would approach. When he at length makes his appearance, it is not as a meek, bare-footed friar, but in full sacerdotal grandeur,—as one having authority over heaven, hell and purgatory. First, advances an attendant bearing aloft a great flame-coloured cross, on which the keys of St. Peter (the papal arms) are painted; then, in a chariot, drawn by two horses, and especially devoted to the purpose, comes the chest,* containing the pardon-letters, and the cash for those already disposed of. Then, in an open chariot, follows the great Pardoner himself, dressed in his most sumptuous mass-robes. By his side, on a cushion of velvet and gold brocade, the coffer, containing the Bull of Indulgence, authorising the distribution of pardons. As soon as the procession has wound under the city gates, all the church bells ring out their most joyous peals; and so the holy man is borne solemnly and slowly towards the cathedral. As his foot passes the sacred threshold, the organ rolls forth its eloquent thunder, his great flame-coloured cross is erected in front of the altar, and the coffer, with the papal Bull of Indulgence, placed on the altar itself.

* The chest was generally made of wood, clasped with iron, and bore the papal arms and six bosses with the triple crown, and the distich:

"Lo! when the money rings in the chest,
The soul from the flames flies forth to rest"—

Was often engraved on the lid.

The Pardoner takes his place on the right, where a chair of state and canopy have been provided in his honour, and after blessing the people, informs them of the authority for the remittance of sins with which he has been invested; so that, "were St. Peter himself present, he could have no completer power." Then follows the "pardon preaching,"—the recommendation of the "letters" from the pulpit. The preacher draws the most appalling pictures of the horrors and pains of purgatory, until the blood of his hearers runs cold. When he has played sufficiently on their fears, he turns to the delights of heaven, and employs his imagination so well upon them that the sensual allurements he conjures up could be with difficulty surpassed.

"Papal indulgence alone can free the sinner from purgatory; the indulgence alone open heaven for him. Verily, this indulgence hath so supreme a power that, had a man violated his own mother, yea, the mother of God, it would yet save him."* "It is not repentance that makes you free from sin,—the indulgence alone can do this;"—the indulgence, which was to be sold for hard cash, and which would make every purchaser "as pure as Adam before the fall." When the congregation is worked on to the right tone, and properly excited, he advances to the iron-bound strong box, and benignly invites his hearers to avoid the penalties and secure the beatitudes he has described, by providing themselves with a certificate of indulgence.

* Such, at least, was the declaration of Tetzel, whom Luther has made notorious for all time.

A distinction was made between general pardons * and those granted for special sins; the former included all the evil deeds of the penitent, and cost, in the case of kings and queens, royal princes, archbishops, bishops, and reigning princes, twenty-five gold florins; for lesser church dignitaries,—counts, barons, and others of the higher nobility, ten; to lower members of the aristocracy, six; to wealthy merchants and professional men, three; for humble chapmen and peasants, one. For still poorer folks, the price was left at the discretion of the pardoner; and to those who could not even beg or borrow a brass farthing for their soul's redemption, he was empowered to give the certificate gratis.† If any one felt a general pardon scarcely adequate to their need by reason of some heavy sin, he might seek a private interview with the dispenser of salvation; and having agreed on the price, and paid it, depart with a special letter of remission, drawn up on parchment, and specifying the particular crime from which the possessor was relieved. Indeed, for every class of sin a special tariff was prepared; so that, before it was committed, the cost of its redemption might be known. According to pope Leo X., "taxa sacræ pœnitentiariæ," sodomy

* These certificates were generally printed upon writing paper, and bore the figure of a monk with a long beard and rosary, and holding a large cross; above him a crown of thorns, and a fiery heart surrounded by a glory; in the upper corners, the two nail-transfixed hands, in the lower, the feet of the crucified Christ. A blank was left for the name of the purchaser. In Hoffman's life of Tetzel, the reader will find a facsimile of one of these letters.

† Instructions on these points, drawn up by the great Farmer of indulgences, bishop Albert, of Mayence, are still extant; and others, by Arcimboldi, General Commissioner of pardons.

cost from ninety gold gulden; sacrilege, perjury, and robbery, from thirty-six; parricide, and murder generally, from thirty; bigamy and adultery, from twenty-four; witchcraft and magic, from six; homicide and incendiarism, from four, &c., &c. Of course these fines were modified according to the means of the offender. For release from purgatory it was customary to demand as much as the deceased person would have expended in a week at his usual style of living. So; a poor man could be sent to heaven for a few groats, whilst a rich one only at the cost of some hundreds or thousands of broad pieces. Thus was the pardon traffic conducted. From the slight sketch which we are alone able to give in these pages, the reader can conceive the magnificent subsidy it must have brought to Rome:—the productiveness of the infamous system lay in the utter demoralisation of the time, of which it was at once the origin and excuse. Murder, adultery, perjury, theft, could all be atoned for at the cost of so much money; and thus the very basis of human morality was in danger of destruction, though the results which in the end ensued from this trafficking with iniquity were little in accordance with those anticipated by its inventors,—results, which gave the deepest wound to the papal power, armed Dr. Martin Luther with his most effective weapons, and brought on the Reformation.*

* In very early days, many princes and rulers resolutely set their faces against this out-flow of treasure, Romeward. Charles VI., of France, for example, forbade his subjects to avail themselves of the Great Jubilee of 1400. Duke Henry the Rich, of Bavaria, did to his the same, declaring: "they could as well earn God's pardon while staying at home as by going to Rome for it." Christian I. of Denmark, in 1469,

But our purpose is not to investigate the details; enough, if we have indicated the inexhaustible sources of wealth which the keys of St. Peter had given access to. Content, however, did not follow, and the papal divining rod was ever employed in searching for new veins of gold; and of these lucrative studies we must give some sketch in our last chapter on this theme.

adopted a different course: he offered no opposition to Martin da Fregano, when that astute priest came to charm the money out of Danish pockets; but as soon as all attainable had been secured, the King ordered him to be arrested, and neither threats nor entreaties availed to obtain his freedom until he consented to share half the booty with his royal captor. Christian II. acted still more severely; he laid an embargo on all money and goods obtained by Arcimboldi, Commissioner General of Pardons, and thus mulcted the pope of 4,000,000 gold florins to the good of the royal treasury. Others, among whom we may mention bishop John VI. of Saalhausen, exerted all their influence against the pardon traffic on moral grounds. The most effectual practical joke on the subject was, perhaps, that played at the cost of the notorious Tetzel. In 1517 he had set up his booth at Leipsig, and there a Saxon noble bought, for twenty thalers, a plenary absolution for all the sins he might in future commit. Not long afterwards, Tetzel left Leipsig and was attacked in a forest by his late client, who not only made treasure trove of the Pardoner's strong box, but beat him severely, stript him of his clothes, and left him naked in the road to shift as he best could. Tetzel, of course, went back in a rage to Leipsig, and brought his case before duke George of Saxony, who at once summoned his vassal to answer the accusation, when the latter proved he had provided himself, before the act, with a plenary pardon. The Duke seems to have enjoyed the smartness of the trick; and Tetzel had to put up with his loss, and the ridicule besides. So were crimes, and absolution of crimes, then regarded.

CHAPTER VI.

PAPAL GREED.

No little embarrassment besets us in writing this chapter. We scarcely know where it should begin, or where end; the material of which we can but so scantily avail ourselves, might well furnish as many volumes as we can grant it pages. John of Salisbury, afterwards bishop of Chartres, told pope Hadrian IV. (1154-59), his personal friend, when the latter begged him to say frankly in what manner the world judged the popes? "People declare, Holy Father (was his reply), that the successors of the apostles do wholly set their hearts on costly furniture and raiment, and that their delight is in beholding their banquets furnished forth with gold and silver plate, and for it they would rob the very churches; people declare they crave the administration of the laws, not for the sake of justice, but for their own shameful gains, and that anything can be bought in Rome for money. People say they plunder whole provinces, as though their object were to acquire the wealth of a Crœsus, and that they carnally delight in purple and fine linen, yea, more than any earthly potentate. Verily I have heard the popes likened unto Beelzebub himself, who men think doth well if he but cease to do evil."

Such was the evidence given by John of Salisbury, one of the most learned and devout of Catholic theologians. The proof of its truth, or, rather, of its extenuating moderation, is afforded by the fact, that Pope John XXII. (1316-34), the son of a cobbler (and therefore assuredly not burdened by ancestral wealth), left as personal property at his death, 18,000,000 ducats, and 17,000,000 ducats worth in valuables, jewels, vases, &c., &c.,* all amassed by shameless fraud or violence. To understand the character of this revenue, we must consider it somewhat more in detail; we must observe the distinctions to be drawn between the regular and extraordinary sources of supply; though, of course, Their Holinesses employed their whole ingenuity to turn any temporary financial expedient into an established tax. We will first consider the regular sources; they were, naturally, the most productive, and came to represent, in fact, a fixed income.

One of the most important items were the "pallium" moneys, an usurious tribute, the origin of which may probably be unknown to the majority of our readers. Constantine the Great had been baptised at the beginning of the fourth century, and both he and his Christian successors endeavoured to obtain the goodwill of the bishops in all the principal cities of the empire, such as Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem, Alexandria, &c., and sought to retain it by according

* This enormous inheritance is comparatively much greater when we consider it was amassed during the exile in Avignon, whilst the whole of the papal states had renounced their allegiance, were in open rebellion, and furnished no part of the papal revenue.

them a great show of respect. Among other things, they were accustomed to present the good fathers with a robe of honour ("orders" were not then invented), consisting in a mantle of the finest wool, adorned with gold embroidery. In the fifth century the bishops (or patriarchs as they were then called) of Constantinople and Rome adopted the imperial observance, and frequently sent to their suffragan bishops, on their assuming office, a like mantle of honour, though not without the previous permission of the emperor.

Naturally, the prelates who received this mark of preference were not unwilling to acknowledge it by substantial proofs of gratitude; to neglect to do so, would but have invited its speedy resumption. Indeed, only those who had already distinguished themselves by devotion to the interests of their spiritual head, could ever anticipate receiving this supreme favour.*

The pallium originated in this robe of honour, and from a temporal, soon became solely an ecclesiastical "decoration"—if we may so term it—and a further means of binding the recipient to the papacy. When the Western Empire gradually sank to its final disintegration, and Italy, and Rome especially, sought release from longer dependence on the Byzantine Empire, the Roman bishops assumed the right of presenting the mantle, without any imperial authorisation asked or bestowed, and accorded the gift in the plenitude of their own authority. Petitions for it were constantly preferred; for every dignitary of the church longed to be-

* Virgilius, who held St. Peter's keys from 538 to 544, was the first Roman bishop who bestowed the pallium.

hold himself possessed of the decoration. The metropolitans* (the archbishops of later times), asserted it had been from of old enjoyed by their episcopal predecessors, and based their own claim, so to say, on the ground that the pallium would but fittingly distinguish them from the mere bishops. This thirsting for pomps and vanities ecclesiastic, the popes had too much tact not to employ to their own advantage, and they ordained that every one on assuming the title of "Metropolitan," should also receive the robe of honour. Such was the decision of Zacharias (741-52), emphatically reasserted by Nicholas I. (858-67), Gregory VII. (1073-86), and Innocent III. (1198-1216); whilst they all positively declared the metropolitan dignity indissolubly bound up with this typical garment, and therefore no metropolitan or archbishop could exercise his office before receiving its investiture from the pope.

For some time an occasional archbishop was found to contest this assumption, and as late as the tenth century, we find several who exercised their spiritual authority without the Roman legitimation; but as a rule, it became an established custom for the prelates of the Western church to accept the pallium, which at once marked them out from the lower dignitaries, and made patent their own peculiar rank.

Thus smoothly was the growing ambition of the popes facilitated. Gregory VII. ordained that each newly-appointed metropolitan should go in person to Rome for investiture, with his robe of office, or within three

* We shall speak at greater length on this subject in a subsequent book—"Pope and Humility."

months dispatch thither a plenipotentiary to receive it in his name. The same pontiff decreed that every one honoured with the pallium should take an oath of fealty to Rome, acknowledging himself a vassal of the papal crown. Thus the dogma was established that the possession of the pallium gave the title of archbishop, and the "plenitudo officii pontificalis" (all the prerogatives of the office), a dogma still acknowledged by the Catholic church.

But the pallium is no longer the gorgeous gold-broidered purple robe the emperors bestowed; such a present would be far too costly for the successors of the apostles to indulge in; they have with discreet economy replaced it by an article which can pretend to no value whatever, except through the pious ceremonies to which it is submitted.

The modern pallium, as it has existed since the twelfth century, is merely a fine white woollen band, two inches in width, with a cross embroidered in black silk, and from which hang two other bands over the shoulders of the wearer. A very unpretending decoration; but the more solemn is its manner of manufacture, over which, indeed, the papal sub-deacon has strict and especial charge. Annually, on St. Agnes Day, 21st January, in the church dedicated to the fair saint,* two snow-white lambs are offered at the high altar, not slain, but laid upon it, with their feet tied, to prevent unseemly recal-

* "Santa Agnese fuori di Porta pia," is the full title of this church, which adjoins the St. Agnes convent. The high altar there is peculiarly holy. "For the very holiness of Christ himself is held within it."

citrance, and so they may receive its especial sanctity. When they have been blessed by the officiating priest, they are gently delivered back to the sub-deacon of St. Peter's,* who then transfers them to the convent garden of St. Agnes, where they remain until shearing time. The same holy man shears them, and confides the fleece to the nuns, they having spun it as fine as possible, then fabricate the pallium bands, which are given to the deacon, who, after consecrating them, leaves them on the graves of St. Peter and St. Paul, during two succeeding nights, after which they are transferred to a casket, placed on a seat in St. Peter's, once used by its patron apostle, and there they remain until accorded to the archbishops by the pope.

Such is the reverent care with which the pallii are prepared; but the reader may feel some curiosity wherefore the popes should insist on endowing their chief hierarchs with this peculiar gift. The explanation is only too simple: the popes bestow no honours that are not solidly repaid.

Whilst the pallium was still a costly mantle, no demand was ever founded upon it against the recipient; it was recognised as an honorary distinction and free

* The conveyance of the lambs to the church is accompanied with peculiar solemnities. The sub-deacon, who must always be provided with a sufficient flock, chooses two of the finest from among them, has them washed, packed in panniers swung over a horse, and instructs the attendant, who has them in charge, to proceed up the Via di Pietro, past the Vatican, whence it is supposed the holy father looks forth from a window, and blesses them as they are carried by. The procession which accompanies them grows as it proceeds, until by the time it reaches St. Agnes church, at the other side the city, its magnitude is sufficiently imposing.

gift. But even in very early times the gift was much abused. Pope Gregory I. found it necessary to issue a decree prohibiting the sale of the pallium, and Pope Zacharias declared it simony * to demand money on any pretext for it. Later popes discovered a more euphonious epithet, and though maintaining it was sinful to ask payment for the pallium, they qualified the condemnation by adding it was quite justifiable to receive a voluntary thanks-offering in return.

Archbishop Anselm of Canterbury mentions, in a letter still extant, that he had sent a "goodly" sum to Rome, on his investiture with the pallium, and that all former archbishops obtained it in the same wise, though the amount they paid varied with the wealth of the diocese. A century later the "gift" became an organized tax, and the mystic fillets were not bestowed until the fees for them had been fully liquidated; the popes had then attained the apogee of their power, and as no archbishop could "arrogate" his duties "without the pallium," Rome boldly replied: "therefore you shall buy the 'pallium' at my price." The popes carried the shamelessness of the traffic to the highest during the "exile" in Avignon (1307-1377). The charge for each pallium was in accordance with the wealth and importance of the see it represented, though 30,000 gold florins was the average price. Nor was one such payment often sufficient. Should the metropolitan wish to change his See, or

* The "Acts of the Apostles" tell us how Simon Magus sought to obtain the "gifts of the Holy Ghost" by bribing the apostles; from whence the attainment of spiritual offices through purchase is entitled simony. It has always been held a deadly sin by the church.

consent for any reason to be translated to another, the new pallium had to be redeemed by him at the same rate at which it had been first purchased. This remains a rule with the Roman church to the present day. When an archbishop dies he must carry this insignia with him into the grave, and leave his successor to provide himself with a new one. It was clearly the interest of the papacy to dispose of as many of these precious adornments as possible, whilst the death of each archbishop ensured so many thousand florins to the Roman treasury.

The popes soon found it desirable to regard the sale of the pallium as no simony, indeed to have refused so profitable an arrangement would have been held by them as an inexpiable sin, bringing, as it did, so magnificent a revenue for the glory of God. All Europe had its spiritual affairs under a multitude of archbishops, who, when chosen to their offices, were generally well stricken in years, and could not long retain the costly fleeces woven by Santa Agnes' nuns. The archiepiscopal see of Saltzberg in the seventeenth century had thrice to redeem its pallium within nine years, the transaction costing on each occasion 33,333 ducats; that of Mayence * alone, between the years 1200 and 1700, expended 3,000,000 gold florins in the same tribute. The moneys that

* The archbishops of Mayence never secured the pallium under 30,000 gold florins, and often were in no slight strait to get so large a sum together. Many of them borrowed it, at high interest, from the Jews; others, as Archbishop Albert, at the time of the Reformation, obtained it from the famous Fuggers, and mortgaged certain items of their revenue to liquidate the debt. Archbishop Manulph was a more acute financier; he amputated a leg from a gold image of Christ in the cathedral, melted it down, and so paid the pope for his new dignity.

flowed into Rome for these woollen trimmings might be reckoned not by millions only, but by millions told in thousands. Now and again the tribute was characterized in fitting terms of reprobation; the council of Bâle, for example (anno 1431), even went so far as to denounce the pallium money as an "usurious contrivance invented by the papacy," declared it illegal, and passed a decree by which all persons either giving or receiving it were pronounced liable to all the penalties involved by simony; but such a retrenchment was too cruel for the endurance of the popes who finally succeeded, thanks, in great part, to the astute bishop of Sienna (afterwards Pius II.), in inducing the feeble emperor, Frederick III., in 1448 to reinstitute the tax by his "Vienna Concordat." Since then it has remained undisturbed, and all the remonstrances, the usuriousness contrivance has given rise to, have had no other result than to restrain it within somewhat more decent limits. Wholly abrogated it will never be.*

A not less excellent means of supply was yielded in their time by the "Annatæ, or Annalia, Servitia communia," or "Jus depertuum," an invention of Pope John XXII., who reigned, as we have already seen, from 1316-34. A priest on receiving ordination had been accustomed from early times to offer some token of his gratitude to his elder brother in Christ, from whom he trusted to have received the Holy Spirit. The pope, however, gradually engrossed all the more important

* We are, unhappily, unable to give the present rate of the pallium fees, as the Roman Curia constantly modifies its demands according to external circumstances and requirements.

ordinations, and, at the same time, laid claim to the "presents," which became transformed into "Servitute" (obligatory fees). The first example of a demand of this kind is offered by Clement V., the predecessor of John XXII., who claimed a yearly tribute from the bishops of England in acknowledgment of their ordination. John XXII. went still further, asserting the right of the papal chair to a year's income of every see that fell vacant. Nor was this unreasonable: if the archbishops were obliged to pay for their pallium a sum of 26,000 to 30,000 gulden, it would surely not have been right to let the bishops and lesser dignitaries go scot free. Pope John astutely refrained from immediately enforcing the claim he asserted, and soon had the satisfaction of finding it generally recognised. So much tact did he bring to the work, that he even secured the full concurrence of the bishops themselves. He then bethought him this or that episcopal see, this or that archbishopric was too large for its spiritual welfare to be fittingly attended to by a single bishop, or archbishop, and proceeded to create many new ones. Numberless ecclesiastical aspirants thus obtained an outlook for speedy promotion, and were willing enough to sacrifice a year of its income (annalia) to secure it. The pope proceeded with the same pious activity against all pluralists: the abuses they fostered must be removed, for "the service of God suffered by them;" those who held several benefices were obliged to content themselves with one, giving up all the others; and once more the hopes of the preferment seekers found fruition only on sacrifice of the first year's income.

Such excellent experience had not been gained in vain, and the pope was soon enabled to carry out his idea still further. If a rich benefice fell to his disposal, he took care to transfer it to a person holding a somewhat less profitable charge, of course only on promise of the Annalia. The appointment made vacant was filled from a still inferior one, which had again to be supplied from a yet poorer; and thus the nomination to one important benefice often occasioned seven or eight promotions, though of course not one could be enjoyed without formal agreement to render the stipulated papal perquisites.

Such was the system inaugurated by John XXII., and, as it proved highly profitable, his successors were not only little disposed to renounce it, they took every means to perfect its organization, and to this end definitely fixed the average amount to be paid for each benefice in their gift. Here, as if by magic, was another mine of wealth opened up, which was destined to give its millions * to the papal coffers. Many bishops paid 20,000 florins for promotion; and however individual priests, monarchs, or states might rebel at the imposition, the annalia held their ground, and do so still.

All this was still insufficient; and the popes of the

* Both the annalia and the pallium fees were abolished by the Council of Bâle, and the demand or payment of them declared simony; but the Emperor Frederick III. (1448) again granted both perquisites to the popes, as part of their just revenue, and from that time they have been preserved by the Catholic church as one of its irrefragable rights. The apostolic chair still raises them, though they have been changed into a fixed tax. An important see now pays about 1,000 scudi; a smaller one, five or six hundred.

fifteenth century had the honour of inventing the "Letters of Reversion," presentation to offices and dignities in the church, which were still unvacated. To which particular pontiff the honour of this is due, we cannot say; but by the beginning of the sixteenth century the "Letters" were so numerous, that the practice must have long existed. Pope Alexander III. prohibited, through the "Lateran Council" (1169), that the presentation to any diocese or ecclesiastical office should be made during the life of the holder; from whence we may conclude the abuse had, even at that early date, began to show itself. It grew up out of the traffic in benefices (*annalen*), with little trouble to its cultivators. There were always persons, as there always will be, who, having set their heart on this or that post, this or that dignity, were but too glad to secure it on the death of the actual occupant, by paying down a round sum. They naturally concluded, that as the pope took money for actual investiture, he would not object to sell its reversion; and thereupon, in all simplicity, proceeded to Rome, to conclude the bargain. They had not deceived themselves as to the good will of apostolic majesty; and in exchange for hard cash were soon furnished with the precious parchment securing the desired appointment as soon as it should fall vacant again. So there was a market in Rome where chickens were sold before the eggs were hatched! This trade was soon carried on as eagerly by the buyers as the sellers; the latter, however, always required the immediate payment of the purchase money, so that if the future presentee died before the actual incumbent, the presentation might be

sold over again. The presentee had, however, this advantage: no questions as to his worthiness for the office were asked; no one demanded any proof of his fitness to fulfil its duties;—he had but honestly to count down the required price, and the business was settled. The dullest, most ignorant, shameless, or demoralised person, needed no other recommendation than his own ready money. Germany and France swarmed with Italian priests (of course, Italians could most readily secure the ear of the pope) who had been appointed to benefices, though totally ignorant of the customs of their adopted land, or frequently not knowing one word of its language. Numberless people, having no claim whatever to the sacerdotal functions;—old soldiers, itinerant quacks, mountebanks and such like, frequently got possession of these reversions, until the abuse reached a height of which we can form but slight conception, though it was still to be exceeded.

By the commencement of the sixteenth century the popes began to regard this chaffering with single presentations far too petty a speculation, and came to the conclusion it would be more profitable to farm out all the clerical appointments of a district, or even of a whole province, in a single contract. The traffic ceased to be carried on in detail at Rome: it was confided to certain agents, who undertook the distribution to individual purchasers. Of course, these agents were generally wealthy merchants, such as the Fuggers of Augsburg, or in some instances joint stock companies, who subscribed the heavy capital necessary for the investment. Of course, they could not sell for the same price at which they had bought,

and therefore disposed of their wares to the highest bidder, quite regardless what manner of man he might be.

So great a scandal had never been heard of in Christendom. No wonder the people at length were thoroughly exasperated by the iniquity. The holders of the "Letters of Reversion" were generally called "provisioners," from the French word *provision*,—a something received for a consideration. They were still more frequently known as "prostitutes," from their utter shamelessness; whilst they were liable to get very roughly handled by the flocks they had bought, who often enough, in defiance of the papal mandate, rose in indignant rebellion and drove the new shepherd ignominiously from the fold.*

* We could cite numberless instances in illustration of such proceedings. In 1484, a provisioner had purchased the reversion of a prebendary in Constantz. The old prebend died, and the provisioner prepared to assume his office; but the fellow's character was so notorious, that the very bishop sought the aid of the government to oppose him with force, if necessary. The assistance was at once accorded, "even though it were needed against the pope himself." Still more frequently the provisioner who made claim to this or that preferment was summoned before the town council, under pretence of formally making over his purchase to his ghostly care; instead of which, the deed of reversion which he had been required to produce was riddled with holes, then hung round his neck, a bucket of water soused over him, and then well belaboured by the sticks of his recalcitrant parishioners,—he was driven beyond the walls. In Zurich, as in Lucerne, all provisioners were formally denounced as "worthless fellows," "unlearned" and "unspiritual," and as such, for ever banished from beyond the precincts of those towns. It was further resolved there, that any person concerned in the sale of ecclesiastical reversions should be sewn up in a sack and drowned. This threat had the desired effect. The preferment-mongers turned their attention to other fields of enterprise. In Bavaria they could gain no footing,—they were formally and definitely forbidden to set foot on the territory. This example we find followed by several other German

Despite this resistance, the traffic still increased and spread, and indeed the supply would never have been exhausted, but for the decreasing demands of the market. The popes issued their letters of reversion, as often as before the Reformation; but a public opinion was at last gaining strength in Europe, and the purchasers could have no assurance they would ever be able to enjoy their bargains, and thus the trade fell into desuetude.*

Of the same nature as this ecclesiastical preferment, was the method of appointment to the various Civil and Court offices in Rome. There, too, was no dignity, lay or clerical, which could not be obtained, were but the aspirant's purse long enough. A list is yet extant, in which 651 places are noted down, with their selling price: those of the court proctors, registrars, revisors,

states, though in the most effectual manner by Wirtemberg, as the following anecdote aptly illustrates. Count Eberhardt (afterwards duke of Wirtemberg), visiting Rome on a journey through Italy, in 1481, naturally paid his respects to the pope, Sixtus V., who indignantly demanded if it were true, that "those who went to Wirtemberg with reversions granted at Rome, intending to take possession of their preferments, were incontinently carried on to the roof of their church and kept there until they either died of hunger or fell down from exhaustion, in which latter case their parchment was forced down their throat, and they were finally drowned?" The Duke unhesitatingly replied in the affirmative, and further assured His Holiness, that as long as he (Eberhardt) lived no provisioner should enter his land; "for if he suffered such a rascal, his subjects would believe him a bastard, begotten in a totally different manner to his forefathers." Then Pope Sixtus laughed, and said, "It is well they are not all Wirtembergers in Germany."

* With the exception of the office of coadjutor. It is still customary to appoint a spiritual colleague to a bishop who is likely to grow incapable of discharging the functions of his office; and this colleague always succeeds to the mitre, though he must possess all the canonical qualifications.

notaries, clerks, &c., &c. Even the running footmen and door porters of the papal palaces, though they could not be mulcted of much, still yielded their quota. This list is dated 1471, in the reign of the famous Sixtus IV.,* who by such means added an additional 100,000 ducats to his annual income. Sixtus cannot claim the whole glory of these discoveries; the same financial policy had been initiated by his predecessors, and was still greatly improved by those who came after him.

Far more productive than any local tax, were the marriage dispensations in cases of consanguinity, their action embracing all Christendom, and to this day they still yield no inconsiderable return. Under some of the popes they amounted to a million annually. It is a fundamental dogma of the Catholic church, that the marriage bond is indissoluble, whilst it not less strictly maintains that no marriage at all can take place within the seven prohibited degrees of affinity. How these two articles of faith grew up and were systematised, it is not our province to investigate. Our business is not with church dogma, but with the popes who employed them so well to their own advantage, when they used their absolute power to suspend their most solemn prohibitions whenever it suited their interests.

Marriage between near kindred, and divorce, were equally forbidden; but the popes rarely failed to waive their objections, whenever an applicant could pay for

* Apostolic majesty led another golden rill into the treasury, by the establishment of brothels in Rome; this was also effected under Sixtus, and produced a yearly return of 30,000 ducats. The same pontiff levied a tax upon priestly concubines.

dispensation. That the inviolability of the marriage sacrament was maintained at Rome on religious grounds, we have no justification for granting; history supplies a thousand instances where all the pious hindrances of the canon laws melted away under the universal solvent, gold; though the pope might firmly enough hold out until the full price for his favours were paid. Did not Pope Martin V. (1417-31) allow a wealthy petitioner to marry his own sister, though the authorisation, of course, cost an enormous sum?*

It is a notorious fact that Sixtus IV., to use the words of an old chronicler: granted to divers persons the privilege, for which they richly paid him, of solacing certain matrons, as in the absence of their lords. Of course, the poor or the avaricious could not profit by these arrangements; but there were always enough of the rich and noble, who were ready to sacrifice their ducats to their desires. The holy sacrament of marriage proved prolific of gold and silver to the successors of St. Peter.

But enough—the present chapter already exceeds its fitting limits, though we have still to recall a few of the more striking and successful examples of pontifical greed. Of the immense influence of excommunication in establishing the authority of ecclesiastical Rome, we have to speak in a later chapter; but it was not less useful in filling the papal coffers. To cite but a few

* This fact has been frequently contested, and, indeed, it may seem suspicious that the name of the applicant is no where cited; but as those who transmit the tale have been proved reliable in other instances, we can scarcely ignore their testimony.

instances:—Boniface VIII. (1294-1303) placed Frederick of Trinacria under the ban, for refusing an annual 3,000 ounces of gold as Peter's pence; but Benedict XI. (1303-4) relieved the king therefrom, on condition of his making over 1,000 ounces. Gregory IX. (1227-41) was enabled to distinguish himself far more effectually: Having excommunicated the Emperor Frederick II., because his majesty had not been able to commence a crusade at the stipulated time, he absolved him a few years later in consideration of a compliment in the form of 100,000 ounces of gold.* This pious zeal was devoutly followed by Clement V. (1305-16), who fulminated a Bull of excommunication of quite unexampled character against the Republic of Venice, for having refused to pay him fealty in the form of 20,000 ducats, for the city and province of Ferrara it had lately conquered; nor did he raise the ban until he had finally obtained 100,000 ducats.†

Numberless are the examples of a like kind, but we content ourselves with these; they sufficiently mark the manner in which the fearful prerogative of excommunication was employed as a fiscal resource. Indeed, the Holy Inquisition, of which we must subsequently speak,

* We must remember how vast this sum was, when at that period gold was worth at least tenfold its present value.

† The papal Bull of absolution is dated 26th January, 1313; an amicable understanding with Venice had, however, been come to in May, 1311, and the publication of the pardon was only so long deferred, because the Venetians, rich as their state then was, found the greatest difficulty in getting so vast a sum together. Pope Clement would have granted no credit "on any consideration." It is worthy remark, that the Venetian ambassador when bringing the ducats was obliged to appear with a chain round his neck.

sacrificed innumerable victims merely to secure their property.* Hundreds of so-called witches and sorcerors were condemned, because they belonged to the wealthier classes. Did not a pope sentence every member of a religious order to death, merely to enjoy their possessions? The Templars were the victims, their executioner Clement V.; he who had previously mulcted the Venetians of the 100,000 ducats.

We will but briefly recapitulate the murderous procedure, as our readers will doubtless remember its details, or readily recall them from our short summary. The order of the Templars was founded in 1118, by Godfrey de Bouillon, and his brothers in arms, Sir Hugo de Payen, and Godfrey de St. Omer; its object had originally been the protection of wayfaring pilgrims from the Saracens. Baldwin II.† gave up part of his palace in Jerusalem to the Templars for the seat of the order, and as this palace was built on the site of Solomon's temple, and close to the Holy Sepulchre, the new fraternity took the title of "Knights of the Temple;" their device—"Battle to the infidel, and protection to the holy sepulchre," and whatever their faults, assuredly no braver soldiers ever existed. Their oath of poverty was, however, not long respected: gifts and bequests flowed in to them; especially after the pontificate of Alexander III., who took them under his especial protec-

* Many persons in the terror occasioned by the dread tribunal, and the probability that however innocent, some pretence might be invented to sacrifice them to its avarice or hate, purchased apostolic letters of indemnity from its jurisdiction published by the pope; many, however, still failed to escape, even with this safeguard.

† King of Jerusalem.

tion, and soon their order exceeded all others in wealth and worldly importance. By the middle of the thirteenth century, it possessed in the various Christian kingdoms, principally in France, Spain, England, Italy, and Portugal, no less than 900 estates, with the castles adjoining, and its power and influence seemed constantly in the ascendant. The internal polity of the fraternity was that of a theocratical knightly republic,* frequently assuming a somewhat threatening attitude towards the government of the country in which it was represented. The fraternity often possessed more influence there than the monarch, to whom, indeed, they were in no manner answerable, their allegiance being due to the pope alone. This was frequently and irritatingly felt by the French kings; and Philip IV., as grasping a tyrant as ever abused royal power, growing jealous of their riches and importance, determined to compass their destruction.

It was naturally the interest of the papacy to protect an order which had always proved the firmest friend of the Roman hierarchy; but at the commencement of the fourteenth century the tiara was possessed by a man who was not only vain, foolish, and cowardly, but completely under the influence of his countryman, Phillip of France. This Gascon pope was the Clement V. of whom we have already spoken; he had been bishop of Bordeaux, and still earlier simply Bertrand of Got; his

* It was presided over by a Grand Master, whose power was circumscribed by the chapter of the order. Grand Priors represented the rank immediately below the Grand Master, and administered various offices, whilst bailiffs and priors completed the hierarchy.

elevation was due to French influence, and to French influence his subsequent removal to Avignon.* In this, however, from the papal point of view, does not consist the wrong with which he may be charged, it is that before his nomination he bound himself to make common cause with the king of France against the Templars. Both potentates impatiently desired the dissolution of the order, the destruction of its members, confiscation of their property, and the division of the booty between them. So the act was resolved on, though the results were not quite as Clement anticipated.

When the plan was fully ripe, King Phillip produced certain witnesses who charged the Templars with a long list of crimes;† the king thereupon appointed a tribunal to privately consider these accusations, and investigate the matter thoroughly; at the same time the pope enticed Jacob Bernard de Molay to leave Cyprus‡ for France, thus securing him and the leaders of the order who attended his person. Scarcely had this trick succeeded than it was followed up by the arrest of all who had thus placed themselves in their enemies' power. The betrayed Templars were seized on the night of the 30th October, 1307. In Paris alone there were 140,

* We shall speak later of this transference of the papal seat of government, and of the seventy years' exile called the "Babylonish captivity of the popes."

† The accusations comprised denial of Christ, heathen, or rather Mohammedan apostacy, and unnatural crimes of the most revolting nature—crimes for which no proofs were ever adduced.

‡ The island of Cyprus was then included in Christendom, and nominally governed by King Amalaric, though, after the reconquest of Jerusalem by the Saracens, the Templars had their chief seat there, in the city of Limisso, and were the actual rulers of the island.

including Jacob de Molay, and not less than sixteen times that number in the provinces of France.

A month later the pope issued a Bull commanding the arrest of all Templars wherever they might be found, and then commenced a judicial trial unexampled in all history. Pope and king went hand in hand, appointed judges, or rather inquisitors, who succeeded in obtaining such confessions that, in reading them now after the lapse of well nigh five hundred years, the blood curdles with horror; but, alas! by what agonies had they not been obtained; still, despite the rack and every form of suffering that could be inflicted on the victims, it was long before sufficient evidence could be wrung from them to authorize a capital sentence.

Not until May, 1310, could the first of these organized massacres be consummated. Upon that day fifty-four knights were slowly burnt to death upon a pile erected at the gate of St. Antony at Paris; nine suffered at Senlis, and upwards of thirty in other cities of the kingdom. All, in the hour of death, declared their innocence. This was but the beginning of the end. On the 20th of May, 1311, the pope closed the investigations, and in the following October summoned a council at Vienne to bring the whole proceedings to a close. How shamefully and shamelessly this council acted, is proved by the fact that the later popes dared not let the papers relating to it see the light of day, and actually destroyed the greater number. But, in 1311, pope and king were alike grateful to the council; and, on the evidence furnished by it, His Holiness (3rd April, 1312,) declared the Order of the Templars

abolished by papal ban, and the knights' property confiscated for their notorious misdeeds. These misdeeds were not otherwise particularized,—they were but of secondary interest, the confiscation furnished the real plot of the tragedy. Its closing scene was the burning by slow fire of the Grand Master, the Grand Prior, Hugo de Peraldo, and the Dauphin d'Auvergne. All three, in their last moments, solemnly asserted their innocence; and Jacob de Molay, raising his right hand above the flames, summoned the pope and the king to appear before the Judgment Seat of God ere the year had closed.* So passed the 19th May, 1314, in the city of Paris.

The plot was triumphant, the Order destroyed, and 20,000 knights either put to death by the executioner, or condemned to life-long imprisonment in various convents. Others, more fortunate, entered the order of St. John, or that of the Teutonic Knights, and a few returned to civil life. In France, the king secured all their possessions for the royal treasury.† In England the crown claimed two-thirds; in Germany the proceeds were divided among the Knights of St. John and the local Orders; in Arragon they were bestowed on the order of Calatrava, and in Portugal on that of Christ; in Italy alone the pope was enabled to confiscate to his own advantage, but he secured besides one-half of the sum brought by the grand master from Cyprus. We

* Clement and Philip both died ere the year expired!

† That no other motive than the desire for their wealth actuated Philip we may justly conclude by the fact that in 1301, just one year before the charges brought against the Templars, he at one blow expelled all the Jews from France, and confiscated their property. Eight years later they were suffered to return—to be again despoiled and driven forth.

have surely had sufficient evidence of the papal lust for gold; it grows too nauseating in the details.

We must even pass over such notorious examples as the "corn forestalling" system * employed by Innocent X. (1644-55), the canonization of saints † at so much per head, the trade in relics, in Agnus Dei, ‡ and the still more productive dispensations § from fasts, &c., &c.

* This "corn forestalling" of Pope Innocent consisted simply in his engrossing the entire monopoly of the corn trade within the papal states. The peasant who raised the grain dared neither sell it to foreign nor native merchants, but was obliged to deliver it at a fixed price to the papal agents. Nor could the bakers buy their flour except from his Apostolic majesty. One can readily imagine how productive this monopoly must have been when the grain bought for one ducat was sold at cent. per cent. profit. The immediate successors of Innocent adopted his political economy, and thus the rural classes of the states were doomed to a hopeless struggle with penury, though no more fruitful land was lighted by the sun.

† According to Güntherode, the Jesuits paid 100,000 gold florins to the papal exchequer for the canonization of Loyola, others were not less profitable. We do not enter upon the pope's right to bestow saintship; this, as an article of the Catholic faith, we respectfully ignore; our concern is with the papal abuses merely.

‡ The trade in relics first attained importance during the crusades, when so large an amount of those holy articles were imported from Palestine. So many splinters of the true cross were disposed of, that they would have required at least ten giant trees to have furnished them. The head of St. John was sold three times over, and is preserved in three several churches. The Agnus Dei (or amulets) were brought into fashion by Urban V. (1362-70), and these "lambs of God" were sold by thousands as preservatives against sickness and misfortune.

§ These dispensations still bring some return to Rome, though no longer a revenue as of old. We will not enter on the origin of the Friday and Lenten, the sixth and seventh hebdomadal fasts, though it were unjust to ignore the claim of Gregory I. as the inventor of this "stomach and cooking-craft piety," as a certain satirist denominates it, and as the granter of dispensations in cases of sickness. Later popes gave dispensations at a fixed rate of prices, graduated, however, to meet the

We cannot resist quoting one striking example.

Sultan Bajazet II. had had to contest his throne with his younger brother, Dschem: the latter was overcome, after a bloody battle, and despairing of safety among the Mahommedans, sought it (1485) at Rhodes, with the Knights of St. John. The grand master of the order sent him to the king of France, at Paris, and pope Innocent VIII. gave the King no rest until he had captured Dschem, and made him over to the custody of his Holiness,* "who would use him as a means to work out great things for Christendom:" so said Innocent. What were these great things?—simply a scheme of papal avarice. As soon as Dschem was in the apostolic keeping, Sultan Bajazet was informed of the fact, and he, well aware of the pope's character, at once despatched an embassy to entreat his holiness to retain Dschem as a prisoner, and thus prevent him stirring up civil strife. Of course the embassy did not appear empty handed; they brought the very lance-head with which Christ had been pierced,

means of the different classes of applicants. They also determined the food permissible during the periods of fasting: milk, eggs, fish, otters, crustacea, frogs, snails, &c., &c. Why were these things chosen? Because at the Fall, God had cursed the land, not the water; because, at the Creation, the Spirit of God passed over the great deep; because water is the medium of purification, the chief element in the sacrament; and because the monks loved trout and salmon, and the popes loved the monks; so these articles of food were not flesh, and therefore lawful when men should abstain from flesh. Though we may not be able to follow the argument, such as it is, it was founded on church authority, and therefore need not wonder that all the implements of the "passion" are exhibited as strikingly in the pike as in the passion flower.

* The whole of this romantic history, as related by Malteo Bossi, Panvinius, and other historians, so in detail and upon such grave authority that we can have no reason to question its truth.

many costly pearls and jewels; and 120,000 ducats in hard coin. Bajazet promised, moreover, an annual donation of 40,000 ducats to the papal treasury so long as Dschem was kept secure. Innocent forgot his "grand designs" against the paynims, and,—accepted annual subsidy. When his successor, Alexander VI. (1492-1503), found Charles VIII. of France anxious to liberate Dschem, in order to create a rebellion in the dominions of the Sultan, with whom his most Christian Majesty had become involved in hostilities, his holiness at once informed Bajazet of the plan; and a friendly correspondence ensued between the two potentates.* The several letters that passed referred to a request just agreed to by the pope for sending Dschem, who still was the chief object of his brother's jealousy, quietly out of the world, in consideration of 300,000 ducats. King Charles VIII. unfortunately knew nothing of this secret arrangement, or he would have acted very differently when he came to Italy in the autumn of that year (1494) and demanded Dschem from the holy father, intending to use him against Bajazet. The pope might now seem in a dilemma, but he had tact enough to turn it to his own signal profit. He readily consented to yield up his prisoner, on the king's paying 20,000 ducats for expenses incurred on his account, and his majesty further promising that if Dschem died within any short period his body should be sent back to Rome.

* Giovanni delle Rovere discovered the letters. A Turkish vessel, carrying a confidential messenger from Bajazet to Alexander, being driven on shore at Sinegaglia. He subsequently made them over to the king of France. We have to thank John Burchard, the pope's master of the ceremonies, for their preservation.

The ill-starred prince did not long survive his liberation. Cæsar Borgia accompanied him to the French camp, and soon found means of expediting his departure into eternity. Alexander received the corpse according to agreement, at once forwarded it on to the Sultan, and earned the promised 300,000 ducats.

Surely a sufficiently marked example of the subject of this chapter! and with it we turn from the consideration of papal greed to the more imposing iniquities of papal ambition.

BOOK II.

POPE AND HUMILITY.

"Das schlichte Vorbild Jesu sah man kühn verachtet;
Stoltz nahm der Demuth stelle ein.
Dort war das Himmelreich verpachtet,
Hier prunkte früher Heüchelschein.
Des Gottgesandten Lehre blieb verhönt
Das Laster sah man, Koniglich gekrönt.
Die Wahrheit ward vom Wahn verlacht,
Das licht versank in düstre nacht.
Im Reich der Sittlichkeit war Sittlichkeit verschwunden,
Die Menscheit blutete aus tausend Wunden;
Sich brüstend sass der Antichrist auf seinem Thron,
Dreifach gekront sprach er der Menschheit Hohn!"

A. R.

"Jesu's example men saw set at nought;
Humility displacëd was by Pride;
Heaven's kingdom there was chaffered with and bought;
Here, False Devotion stalked self-glorified.
The God-sent gospel was neglected,—scorned;
With royal diadem foul Sin adorned.
Folly drove Truth away with jest and gibe,
Light sank submerged in Night's invading tide.
From Virtue's realm had Virtue passed away;
Bleeding from countless wounds Earth's children lay;
Whilst Antichrist, thrice crowned, the sceptre swayed,
And mocked the ruin that his hate had made!"

CHAPTER I.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PAPAL IDEA. THE BISHOPS OF ROME DURING THE FIRST NINE CENTURIES.

THE popes, in the excess of their humility, love to call themselves the "Servant of servants;" though never in ancient or modern times, in the east or west, have ever monarchs carried the caprices of despotism to such shameless excess as these devout "*Servi servorum.*" Their arrogance, at one time, went nigh to depose the very Godhead they professed to honour, whilst they exhibited themselves as the supreme divinity to whom alone men-worship was due. That this is no fantastic rhetoric, no exaggeration of their assumptions, the succeeding pages will sufficiently prove.

We have already seen the unpretending character of the bishops and chief elders of the first three centuries. They were men wedded to poverty, without worldly power or privileges, and far the greater number died a martyr's death. Moreover, the little else known of them is known without any certainty; their very names and order of succession are, doubtless, the invention of a later age; but whether the first thirty-two traditionary Roman bishops ever existed, the fact remains the same: they were nothing more than simple priests.

From the moment of Constantine's conversion all this was changed: the Christian became a state religion, and the position of the bishops proved susceptible of strange developments. From that moment we may date the rise of their power and wealth. The erection of the first church* was immediately followed by the growth of a hierarchy, and finally the establishment of the papacy itself. Presbyters and bishops, to whom wealth poured in on all sides, soon became independent of their flocks; and then arose among them a spirit of caste, until, like the Brahmins of the East, they well nigh persuaded themselves they were formed of other clay than the rest of humanity. The power of the bishops in relation to the lower clergy increased in the same proportion. Christianity, as a court religion, gradually included in its fold nearly all the more wealthy and powerful citizens, and it became doubly important the ranks of the working clergy should be adequately supplied. This duty remained solely in the hands of the bishops, whose authority was absolute over the humbler members of the hierarchy. The administration of church property, also, was soon wholly engrossed by them, and the right of determining in synod all questions of ecclesiastical dogma or discipline. Thus armed, it was no wonder they founded large pretensions on their office.

Above the varying importance of the secondary pro-

* The etymology of the word "church" may be unknown to some of our readers. The first Christian temples were called dominicæ (from Dominus),—Lord, or houses of the Lord. In Greek, the language of the polite world, dominica became küriaca (kürios, Lord), and from küriaca, in the days of the Latin empire, came the corrupted forms,—kirche, kirk, church.

vincial cities and communities in which the episcopal sees were placed, the capital of each province, of course, maintained its superiority. The residence of the prefect or governor constituted a capital; and as the greater number of the provincial churches were derived from a capital, they still remained in a dependent relationship towards the Christian congregation there, or rather to the spiritual chief of that congregation. Its bishop, or "metropolitan bishop," was the natural adviser and protector of his provincial brethren, and was honoured accordingly. Thus, spontaneously, did the episcopal system of the church develop. The united churches of each province formed a whole, at the head of which stood the metropolitan,* acknowledged as "the first among his equals." The provincial bishops were accustomed to visit the capital annually for mutual consultation, under the presidency of the metropolitan;† and these synods constituted not only the supreme courts of judicature in all ecclesiastical matters, but from them originated the whole body of canonical laws.

The church did not long remain faithful to the republican character of the metropolitan institution. Among the numerous chief cities of the Roman empire were several which, by greater wealth, population, or political

* He was originally entitled "Episcopus primæ sedis" (bishop of the chief see). We find the title, "Metropolitan bishop," first used at the Synod of Nicæa, anno 325.

† The Metropolitan was charged with the duty of carrying out the decrees of the synods, and his privileges were not unimportant. The synods were summoned by him, he presided at them, the provincial bishops were more or less under his authority, he ordained them. In short, he held much the same position in the ecclesiastical, as the contemporary Prefects held in the political world.

influence, acquired greater importance than the rest; and the metropolitans of these favoured cities assumed a like superiority over their colleagues, whose duties lay in less pleasant places. Besides, nearly all the churches in the larger cities claimed one or other of the "apostles" as their founder, and stood in the relation of a spiritual mother to the surrounding congregations. Their bishop, in place of one, had frequently the care of several provinces, and thus acquired the title of exarch, or patriarch.* Yet this was not sufficient; they had set their heart upon a position definitely exalted above the simple metropolitans. They resolved to obtain the same relative position as the imperial exarchs, who held viceregal authority over a greater or less number of provinces (ducate), each of which was locally administered by its own governor (dux). The patriarchs declared: "That the metropolitan bishops fitly represented within the church the position of the *duces* in the State;—therefore, we, the patriarchs, have, in a spiritual sense, the same privileges and dignities as the imperial exarchs in a secular one." These assumptions proved successful; and by the fifth century the "metropolitan" had developed into a "patriarchate" institution. The Roman empire was marked out into five large divisions, over each of which presided a chief metropolitan, or patriarch, who stood in a like relationship to the lesser metropolitans as the latter to their suffragan bishops.

The government of the church lapsed into the hands

* The title of patriarch (paternal lord) was first formally sanctioned at the Synod of Chalcedon. Exarch had been adopted from the Greek emperors' vicegerents, and to avoid any confusion of persons was shortly laid aside in favour of the former designation.

of an oligarchy, whose five members resided respectively at Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. To their power all other ecclesiastical dignitaries were obliged to bow, though each of the five professed to claim no exceptional authority or spiritual superiority over his immediate colleagues. To carry this equality out in action would have been a sore trial for any oligarchs: we can scarcely imagine that oligarchs ecclesiastic would find it possible. Alas! priestly pride and vanity was not so easily to be laid aside. The five patriarchs were not false to their instincts, but they were destroyed by their mutual jealousy. From the beginning, they pursued each other with such rancour of hatred, calumny, envy and malice, that the most cynical adherent of the old faith could not have wished it fiercer. Each was resolved to obtain the first place; each was resolved to govern the other four. But the chief in this bad pre-eminence, and assuredly not least gifted, otherwise, was the patriarch of Rome; he, who was in the end to remain victor in the struggle, and succeed to the spiritual supremacy of all Christendom.

The Roman bishops had, as patriarchs of Rome, the primacy over all bishops in those provinces and cities within the jurisdiction of the imperial "vicarii urbis," viceroy of Italy. They had become important political dignitaries since the conversion of the empire, though, alas! not the most important for which fact, indeed, the patriarchs of Constantinople were answerable. The latter, after the transference of the seat of government to ancient Byzantium, found themselves placed at the very source of the fountain of honour, and could draw

from it at discretion. This perversity of fortune greatly irritated Bishop Sylvester,* whose hands had baptized the first Christian emperor and his sons, and he at once employed his ingenuity to remedy it. But from the very circumstance of this change in the imperial residence, the patriarchs of Rome soon felt they might derive their greatest advantage; though they must henceforth remain too far removed from the emperors to hope or obtain much by court favour, they would, for that very reason, be left the freer scope for their own policy in Italy and western Europe. How they used this opportunity to found a temporal sovereignty we have already seen; how they used it for the advancement of their spiritual supremacy, it is now our object to investigate.

The main element of ultimate triumph for the Roman bishops was precisely that they were bishops of Rome; the chief priest of the ancient capital of the world necessarily held a quite other position than his brethren, whose care was given to obscure communities. The name of Rome, the tendency of all the wealth and civilization of the western world thither, formed the basis of papal ascendancy in later times. The second element of success was furnished by the tradition that Christianity owed its establishment in Rome to St. Peter, so that the popes were enabled to appropriate to them-

* Sylvester had thought he enjoyed, above all others, the confidence of his sovereign and proselyte, and suffered a painful revulsion of feeling when, at the great council of Nicæa, anno 325, summoned by Constantine to determine certain vexed questions in the church, especially with reference to the Arian heresy, the vice presidential chair was given under the nominal presidence of the emperor, not to him but to Hosius, bishop of Cordova. Sufficient evidence how little an actual primacy was then dreamed of.

selves Christ's words: "I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. And I give unto thee the keys," &c., &c.: deducing from thence that as Peter received the keys of Heaven and Hell from his Master, as chief of the apostles, so they, as Peter's spiritual heirs, inherited his spiritual powers.

We do not enter on the authenticity of the expressions imputed to the great founder of Christianity, though the fact of Peter ever having visited Rome at all has been so greatly contested, that we cannot avoid recalling the question to the reader's attention. It is at least worthy of remark that there is no passage in the New Testament which would imply that Peter had visited the Roman capital, though other journeys taken by him in the service of the faith are carefully particularized.* It is even still more singular that all the writers of the church during the two first centuries are equally silent; only in those of the third do we find the important event referred to. But strangest of all is the fact that St. Paul, who unquestionably was at Rome in the time of the Emperor Nero, and whose letters thence are still extant, never refers in any way to the presence of St. Peter, who, according to the assertions of subsequent bishops, was there at the same date as the apostle of the Gentiles. A somewhat mysterious legend, indeed, and so much the more so as it was subsequently made to include the statement that St. Peter had even

* See Acts of the Apostles, chapters viii., ix., xii., xv., xxxi., xxxii.; Epistle to the Galatians, chapters ii.,xi.; First Epistle of St. Peter, chapters v., xiii.

officiated as bishop of Rome for twenty-five years, and finally suffered martyrdom there by crucifixion.*

Whether St. Peter had or had not been in Rome, whether the legends of his labours in the Eternal City belong to history or to mythos, the result remained the same for the Christians of the fourth century, and not one of the orthodox of that time ever ventured to question the assumed fact, which deduced the origin of the Roman church from the two most famous of the apostles, proved it indebted during a long course of years to the personal guidance of Christ's first proselyte, but also marked it as the favoured source from whence all subsequent apostolic efforts issued.

Whatever was believed in Rome, that was surely right, for did not those very doctrines descend even from the apostles Peter and Paul? Thus it proved singularly fortunate for the tiara, not that the chief of the apostles had been a Roman bishop, but that his successors had established a belief in his episcopal functions.

* Both St. Peter and St. Paul are said to have met their death at Rome, though the latter, as a Roman citizen, was permitted to die by the sword. St. Peter, at his own entreaty, feeling unworthy to suffer in the same way as his Master, was nailed to the cross head downward. The pillar to which he was bound, and the chains he wore, his bones, and those of St. Paul, are still in existence, and are adored by thousands to this day. The fisher's signet—the apostle casting his net to catch believers—which St. Peter had used as the symbol of his office, is still exhibited to the faithful, and one of his Bulls with an impression of the signet at its head. The former, however, was not historically known until anno 985, and there is, perhaps, some error in the authenticity of the Bull, as we find no reference to it earlier than 1662. The seat used by the great apostles at the meetings of the Faithful was shown until 1632, when it needed repair, and, lo! the labours of Hercules were discovered carved on it beneath its outer covering; and the chair stood self-accused a heathen chair, made in honour of a heathen divinity.

The third element of success was constituted by the fact that nearly all the western world having been converted to Christianity by missionaries from Rome, the greater part of Europe naturally looked to the city of the Cæsars as to its spiritual guide. The four other patriarchates, Constantinople, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria, had fixed boundaries, marked by the limits of the empire; those of the patriarchate of Rome were still indefinite from the number of western nations still in a state of barbarism, and all more or less open to proselytizing labours. Here was a wide field for spiritual conquests, and the bishops of Rome immediately perceiving the ultimate advantages of conversions originating with themselves, lost no time and spared no pains in pushing forward the pious work. Nor were their cares directed to the redemption of single individuals, or of mere isolated provinces; they were devoted to the conversion of whole nations, the Christianizing of the greater part of Europe. The Scot, Patricius (St. Patrick,) was sent to Ireland in the cause, anno 432, whilst St. Augustin was despatched to England, St. Gallus to France, St. Boniface to Germany,* &c., &c. Of course, the good missionaries acted completely under the inspiration of their patron the bishop of Rome, and carried with them the Roman dogmas, customs, and canonical discipline as their sole rule of guidance. The population of the west was accustomed from the beginning to seek the spiritual initiative from St. Peter's successor, and

* St. Columban, St. Kilian, St. Emmeran, St. Rupert, St. Willibald, St. Ansgar, &c., &c., to the Angle Saxons, Norwegians, Swedes, Poles, and such like heathen people.

recognise in him supreme and irrevocable authority in church matters.* Where else could the western bishops have sought guidance? in the other patriarchates Greek was the sole medium of communication. "Græca sunt non possunt intelligi" was a common expression with the priests of Europe, who, indeed, had no alternative but to constitute the western patriarch their sole arbiter and adviser—a duty he but too willingly assumed, for, since the conversion of the barbarians, the Roman bishops studiously mixed themselves in every controversy, and soon arrogated the sole right of determining each. "Roman canon law shall be universally acknowledged, and the decision of the bishops of Rome final in every case." So resolved the successors of St. Peter, even in comparatively early times, and then appointed vicars to carry out the plan in the various districts of their vast diocese. "For it is far to Rome, the apostolical Holiness declared, and if each person would come hither for advice on every question of conscience, he might wait half an eternity before he could receive it, therefore we appoint our vicars, who shall give counsel in our stead, that it may be seen we study the convenience of the western bishops to the full verge of our ability."†

* The compulsory conversion of the Saxons under Charlemagne was of no little service to the papacy, and as the great emperor proposed to give a stronger bond of union to his conquests by a common Christianity, it was essentially necessary that none but Roman Christianity should be admitted in them. With this object he gave every assistance to the bishops of Rome in establishing bishoprics, and monasteries dependent upon them, in the forcibly Christianised lands.

† These vicars apostolic make their appearance in history as early as anno 412. The Roman patriarch generally chose a metropolitan for the office, whose devotion to his patron had been proved.

The last great element in the development of the papal idea, was the rise and rapid growth of Mohammedanism. It may seem paradoxical that Islam, which inflicted so many injuries on Christendom, could serve the ambition of a Christian hierarch; but Islam removed many troublesome rivals who had long contested the assumptions of the Roman episcopacy. Again, the conquest of North Africa by the Arian* Vandals, in the fifth century, was of great advantage to the patriarchate of the west, as the orthodox bishops were obliged to seek help from Rome, to bring the heretics to sounder views. Still of chief moment was the rapid spread of the religion of the crescent. After Persia, Asia Minor, Egypt, North Africa, Spain, &c., had been overrun by the Saracens, Christianity swept away, and with it the patriarchates of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch; the bishop of Rome had but one rival left: he of Constantinople. But, indeed, this last was far more redoubtable than all the other three had been; for did he not even pretend to precedence over his brother of Italy, and had strengthened that pretence by imperial fiat? The Greek emperors, for political reasons, declared the church of Constantinople supreme over all others; this decree was confirmed by the Synod of Chalcedon, anno 451, and was supported by many of

* Arius held Christ not to be "of one substance with the Father," but a created being; a man, though a peculiarly gifted one. For this "rationalism" he was excommunicated by the Council of Nicæa; but, despite the ban, his views rapidly spread, until they included whole nations. Not until two hundred and fifty years had passed, and thousands had been involved in deadly strife through it, in the endeavour at mutual destruction, was the heresy at length put down.

the subsequent Greek emperors—by Leo the Isaurian especially—despite the protests of the Roman prelate. There seemed little probability that this remaining opposition would be overcome, and had the Eastern emperors retained their power, the patriarch of Constantinople might have become universal primate.

But this was not to be; their western dominions were lost in the overwhelming flood of northern barbarism, and their eastern—kingdom after kingdom, province after province, fell from their feeble grasp. The eastern patriarchate shared the doom of the empire, and soon that of the west had little to fear from a rival, whose authority was circumscribed by the limits of a single city,* or the districts a little beyond its walls.

Another boon for which Rome might well have been grateful, was the necessity of church countenance to Pepin, for the successful issue of his usurpation, and his acknowledgment of this by making over the temporal government of St. Peter's patrimonium to the saint's successors, by which the spiritual dignity of the patriarchs was enhanced by the addition of royal power. As independent princes, they at once took a far higher position than any of their episcopal colleagues, and were thus enabled to assume supreme rule throughout the greater part of their peninsular, in things concerning both this world and the next.

* During the period of the Saracenic conquests, and subsequent dominion, the bishops of Rome continued to ordain to the lost sees, and the prelates so appointed, signed themselves "in partibus infidelium." The church of Rome could never acknowledge the loss of anything it had once possessed, and made titular dignitaries in defiance of political facts.

We have seen the general plan on which the Roman bishops acted, but we have not yet observed how individual prelates used the levers they had secured, so that little by little the patriarchate was raised into a papacy.

Roman bishops, even in earlier times, had not seldom distinguished themselves by their ambition, but for many years it was moulded on no definite plan. Bishop Victor (193-202) affords an example of their pretensions. At that time Christians and Jews alike celebrated Easter with roast paschal lamb; but in Asia Minor it was customary to eat it on the fourteenth night of the Jewish month Nizzan, as Christ had done; whilst in Rome, as a mark of distinction from the Jews, a Friday was always appointed for the festival. The chief presbyter of Smyrna, Father Polycarp, during a visit to his colleague, Anicet of Rome, in A.D. 165, had defended this divergence, without injuring the good understanding then existing; but thirty years later Victor was chief bishop in Italy, and soon informed his Christian brother of Smyrna he could no longer hold communion with him, if he persisted in having the typical roast served up at such an heterodox time. There was still sufficient good sense in Christendom for Victor's pretensions to meet with universal discountenance, he was obliged to withdraw them, acknowledge he had been ill-advised, and general unity of faith was preserved, notwithstanding the slight differences of local observances.

Far more important was a later theological dispute on the necessity or non-necessity of re-baptism, for per-

sons who had originally received the rite from an heterodox priest.*

Carthage said "yes;" Rome said "no;" and each chief presbyter declared heaven on his side. Stephen I. (253-57) governed the church in Rome at this period, and Cyprian, still honoured as one of the fathers, enjoyed the same dignity in the rival city. Cyprian summoned two synods, the latter of which was attended by eighty-seven bishops, who all pronounced themselves of his opinion. Bishop Stephen, nothing daunted, maintained the orthodoxy of his own fiat — "for had not the Roman church been founded by St. Peter, and the observance for which he contended had obtained since the days of the great apostle." This was the first formal claim advanced by a Roman prelate as the heir of St. Peter, or for the Roman church, as founded by the crucified apostle. The contemporaries of Stephen not only refused to entertain his assumptions, but expressed the most positive reprobation of their vain-glorious absurdity. Cyprian addressed a letter of remonstrance to him, in which he declares, "custom, without truth, is but superannuated error;" and Bishop Firmilian of Cappadocia, in an encyclical brief issued on the occasion, says;—"Righteously am I angered with Stephen,

* We must remember the dogmas of the Church were still very fluctuating: it was not yet determined which of the more than twenty gospels existent were to be accepted as the rule of faith. The New Testament, as it now stands, was not compiled until A.D. 325. Disputes on the Trinity, the two-fold nature in Christ, His Godhead, &c., were universally occupying the thoughts and ingenuity of disputants. The truth was determined by the majority of votes in each council called to determine it.

who doth exalt himself above others on account of his office; yea, declareth he is the very heir of the blessed St. Peter."

Nevertheless, Stephen's successors maintained in the teeth of their brother dignitaries, "We are greater than ye are, forasmuch as we are the inheritors of the prince of the apostles."

These pretensions were exhibited very conspicuously by Julius I. (337-57). An eastern synod had deposed bishop Athanasius from the see of Alexandria on account of heretical opinions, and the bishop immediately appealed to Rome against the decision. Pope Julius at once declared the sentence had no sufficient grounds, and severely reproved the synod for "coming to any judgment at all without first consulting him, in obedience to the just prerogatives of the Roman church, as they had existed from the days of its first founder." Julius longed sorely to assume the dignity of supreme judge spiritual; but the eastern bishops assembled at Antioch paid no heed to his claims, and informed him, that though his diocese might be larger, his own powers were no more than those of other metropolitans.

This contest raged long and fiercely; even the Council of Sardica assembled, by the sons of Constantine, anno 347, to adjust the theological controversies of the time, could effect nothing in it, the council itself collapsing by the withdrawal of the eastern bishops, who felt scandalised by the presence of Athanasius. Not until the time of Bishop Liberius (352-66), was peace restored between Rome and the recalcitrant churches. Liberius then consented to join in denouncing Athanasius; but

his inducement was, that the Emperor Constantius himself was half an Arian; and Liberius, by embracing the imperial side of the controversy, became answerable for a like depth of heterodoxy.*

Still more determinately did Bishop Siricius (384-98) assert the apostolic inheritance; when some Spanish prelates consulted him upon certain religious observances, he replied, unhesitatingly, "Such and such things it is your duty to maintain, and whoso neglecteth them will be cast off from the rock on which Christ hath built his church." Rome was, of course, the "rock," for was not Peter the chief of the twelve apostles? In the same spirit Pope Innocent I. declared, in a letter to Bishop Decentius, anno 416, "All the western churches shall be ruled by the customs, discipline, and dogma of that of Rome, for hath not all Italy, France, Spain, and Germany derived the faith from the successors of St. Peter!" He declared that the apostolic chair was "the central point towards which it behoved all the western churches to reverently turn for guidance. Zozemus, the next succeeding Roman bishop, strengthening himself on this dictum, attempted to arrogate the prerogatives of a supreme judge,† and adopted the bold words, "sic placuit sedi apostoliæ," ("it pleaseth the Apostolic Chair"): yet, despite these high pretensions, despite the legitimation accorded them by the Council of Nicæa, which formally recognised the power of

* Athanasius belonged to the orthodox party, the bishops who deposed him were semi Arians; that is, they only acknowledged the "likeness of God in Christ," whilst the Arians proper denied all divinity whatever to Jesus of Nazareth.

† In the famous Pelagian controversy then commencing.

Rome to "bind and loose," as the recipient of Peter's authority; the bishops of north Africa were still disobedient, and demanded the original documents on which these new pretensions were founded, and as no documents were forthcoming, declined to conform. Undeterred by this defeat, the following bishop, Cœlestin (422-32), commenced the struggle anew; but on this occasion it was to meet with no better success. Agiarius, presbyter of Sicca, in Numidia, had been degraded by his metropolitan as guilty of adultery, robbery, and various other crimes. Agiarius appealed to the bishop of Rome as patriarch of Numidia; Cœlestin grasped eagerly at such a fortunate opportunity, and immediately despatched a legate with orders for the bishop to reinstate the presbyter without delay. No sooner was this decree made known, than all the bishops of north Africa immediately gathered in synod, protested against the interference of the Roman see in their affairs, and declared that "modesty and humility were far more seemly in him who claimed to be the representative of St. Peter, than empty pride and carnal ambition." Agiarius got nothing by his appeal, nor was Rome profited by adopting his cause.

This continued ill success in north Africa must have materially assuaged the pious grief felt in Rome when at length those rebellious dioceses were overrun by the Arian Vandals, and finally fell into the hands of the Saracens. More substantial consolation was yielded by Europe, which reverently beheld in Rome the fount and mainspring of its salvation. Here and there an occa-

sional prelate, those of Gaul most frequently, ventured to oppose the popular current of opinion, but Leo the Great (440-61) contrived to effectually crush their antagonism. Hilarius, metropolitan of Arles, dispossessed Caledonius, one of the bishops of his diocese, for various offences against the canon law. Caledonius, like his Numidian fellow-sufferer, sought redress at Rome. It was then Roman policy to support the lower dignitaries of the church against their superiors in any dispute, quite irrespective of its grounds; by this means the power of the higher prelates could be most effectually restrained, whilst all they lost lapsed into the hands of the Roman pontiff. Caledonius was therefore pronounced innocent of the charges brought against him, and Leo sternly admonished the metropolitan of Arles to reinstate the dispossessed bishop. Leo professedly founded this command on his own "apostolic" character, and on the origin of the church of Gaul, in Rome, whither it had always turned for advice, or sought arbitration in questions of church government. Hilarius naturally still proved refractory, and was supported by many of the bishops of Gaul, despite Leo's representations, that the latter would find their reward in siding with Rome against their ambitious metropolitan, they maintained their internal ecclesiastical affairs were not cognizable by a foreign tribunal. Leo had still an all-powerful resource by which to bring these proud prelates to his feet; he applied to the Roman emperor (who was under the dominion of the empress-mother, Leo's own too devoted friend,) and at once an

imperial decree was issued by which Gaul, and the adjoining provinces, still left to the Cæsars, were pronounced subject in all spiritual things to the patriarch of Rome, whose commands should thenceforth be regarded by the Gallic bishops as law; and, finally, that every bishop who refused, after citation, to appear before the judgment seat of the Roman patriarch, should be forced to obey by the civil governor of the province concerned. Thus the supremacy of the Roman patriarch received the imperial fiat, and though the declining empire was in a few years to be crushed in the shock of the great German invasion, the pretensions of the Roman bishops to the patriarchate of the west were left unimpugned. The mighty immigration from the woods and wilds of Germany and Scandinavia was to overthrow the whole framework of society, and the nice-balanced structure of church policy had to be laboured out once more; but out of this chaos and wreck of a world, those who sat watching in Rome well knew how to turn the horrors and ruin of the tempest to their own gain.

Up to this date the policy pursued by the bishops of Rome was of no very defined character, and had but been carried out now in this direction, now in that, wherever there seemed hope of additional influence over the western churches. The thought of actual spiritual supremacy and independent temporal power was long ere it took shape. Division of ecclesiastical authority with the patriarchs of Constantinople was the height of their present aspirations, though, of course, any inequality in the division, if to their own advantage, would have seemed so much the more desirable.

After the fall of the western empire, the subsequent subjection of Italy to the Byzantine sovereigns was scarcely more than nominal, and far higher schemes thenceforth took possession of the Roman bishops. The patriarch of Constantinople was necessarily a subject of the Greek emperor, and, though never so greatly favoured by him, still doomed to a dependent position. Was it equally impossible for the patriarchs of Rome to achieve independence? Might they not become rulers over church and priesthood, as the kings they anointed were over temporal lords and lordships? The various states emerging from the cataclasm which had overwhelmed the old empire of Rome, were all based on the feudal system; their several provinces were divided into earldoms or baronies, each province generally containing about fifteen such, under the supremacy of a duke, and the united dukedoms formed a monarchy. How fittingly might the bishops represent the barons, the overbishops * or metropolitans the dukes, and the patriarch of Rome the royal Head of the State.

Thus arose the monarchical idea in the patriarchal mind, and though in the earlier stages of its development it was somewhat vague, yet as each succeeding Roman bishop laboured to carry on the work of his predecessors, each century saw the mighty edifice of a spiritual kingdom grow with increasing strength and grandeur. The Roman bishops began to feel the full importance of their task, and give their whole energy to

* Overbishop is in Greek archiepiscopus, from whence archbishop; by which title it became customary to designate the metropolitans, from the fifth and sixth centuries.

its furtherance. It was at this epoch, between the sixth and eleventh centuries, that the northern nations were brought into the Christian fold. Then, too, came the invaluable labours of St. Boniface, the apostle of the Germans,* who achieved more for Rome among the Teutons and Gauls than a hundred ordinary missionaries. He was the first archbishop of Mayence, and, Vicar-apostolic of France. He it was who induced the archbishops of France and Germany to unanimously bind themselves to solicit the "pallium" from Rome, and hold their election invalid until it had been obtained. They still more emphatically acknowledged the supremacy of the great western patriarch in granting appeals to Rome on the part of their suffragans, and in recognising peculiar exemptions† in favour of certain religious Orders, who disclaimed the authority of their natural superiors, the archbishops, and bowed only to that of the bishop of Rome, greatly to the interest of the latter.

Examples, in plenty, offer themselves in illustration of this so well-concerted monarchical policy; but our space forbids their quotation, though we cannot resist citing one instance of its character and effect,—the assumption of the papal title, now first claimed, and which was afterwards to become so famous.

We have seen the bishops of Rome and Constanti-

* Boniface, before leaving Rome, was sworn on the grave of St. Peter by Gregory II., to support constantly the interests of the church of Rome, and in all things to conform to the wishes of its patriarch.

† The oldest example of an exemption of this kind is afforded by the Monte-Casino monastery, in Naples, founded anno 529, which was erected into a Benedictine abbey by pope Zacharius (741-752), in the presence of thirteen archbishops and sixty-eight bishops. With the consecration was bestowed the privilege, on its abbot, of responsibility to Rome alone.

nople possessed the two most important patriarchates, and were frequently called, in the language of flattery, œcumenical (universal) bishops or patriarchs, from whence, in later times, the term œcumenical,—catholic, universal, church, &c. The Roman bishops, Leo (440-51), Hormisdas (514-23), Boniface (530-32), &c., &c., and the Byzantine patriarchs, John (451), Menes (536), &c., &c., accepted the title with the quiet complacency of men who are flattered with one to which they dared make no claim. John III., patriarch of Constantinople (587), formally assumed in synod the title of "œcumenical," the assembled bishops uttering no word of remonstrance. Pelagius II. of Rome, however, full of pious indignation, declared the pretension "sinful vanity;" whilst his successor, the famous Gregory I. (590-604) was even more indignant at such "mad pride;" and as John continued to employ the title regardless of the anger of his Roman brother, Gregory further denounced it as "blasphemous and devilish," and wrote * at once to the emperor Mauritius and his consort, accusing John as "sinning against the majesty of the imperial crown" by his "assumptions, whilst the bishop of Rome humbled himself as the '*servus servorum*,'† though in sooth far greater than his brother of Constantinople." But the Emperor confirmed his patriarch in the designation, and the latter was thenceforth formally authorised in its use. Anno 601 witnessed one of the frequent "revolutions of the pa-

* These denunciatory letters are still in existence, as well as Gregory's correspondence with the patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria on the subject. He characterises John in them as a "forerunner of antichrist;" and a man who delighteth to contrive strife and universal contention.

† A title then first adopted by the popes.

lace" at Constantinople. The imperial guards and court minions deposed Mauritius and placed their favourite, Phocas, a drunken, debauched tyrant, on the throne. The new Emperor put the wife and daughters of the legitimate sovereign to death, and spared no one who had shown attachment to their family, whilst his consort aided him to the best of her power in all his crimes and excesses. The patriarch, Cyriakas, ventured a few words of expostulation; and though the despot feared to enrage the populace by attacking the head of the church, the latter thenceforth met but cold welcome at court, and this was soon known at Rome. Boniface III., who had mounted St. Peter's chair, anno 607, immediately dispatched an embassy to announce his own election, and entreat its recognition by the Emperor, offering at the same time his warmest congratulations on the Emperor's accession, felicitated the country on the downfall of the godless tyrant, Mauritius, and overwhelmed Phocas and the worthless woman his wife with the grossest flattery. Such an allocation was received with no little complacency at the court of Constantinople; and Boniface had no difficulty in irritating Phocas more and more against the recalcitrant patriarch, until the decree constituting him "universal" bishop was reversed in favour of the successors of St. Peter. The title which, in Byzantium, had been "blasphemous, devilish, and antichristian," was received in Rome with a "Te Deum laudamus!"

The Roman patriarchs became "œcumenical patriarchs;" nor did they enjoy the pleasant flattery of a sounding title alone,—they took care to secure the

power suggested by it. Boniface at once summoned a synod in St. Peter's, and it was there determined that no future episcopal nomination in western Christendom should be held valid unless it had originated with the priesthood and people, had then been authorised by the sovereign, and finally received the pope's fiat, either from him personally, or his appointed legate. The words to be used on such occasions being, "volumus et jubemus" (we will and ordain). Herein lay the germ of a universal monarchy, whilst the newly-accorded title, "universal" bishop, would furnish its legitimation. As the Greek patriarchs might not improbably outlive their present disgrace to share the title they alone had once enjoyed, the Roman adopted one their rivals could make no pretence to,—this was, "papa,"* or "pope;" thus, in the seventh century, the Roman bishops were alike

* Papa is derived from the Latin word, pater (father), as is the German designation, *pfaffe*, which in the middle ages simply indicated a priest: but now used as a term of contempt, to express the meddling, self-importance of the clergy. Pater, in Latin, had given papa as a pleasant nursery word, kindlier to a child's lips than the consonants of the original. Tutors and others, to whom affectionate respect was intended, were called *papæ* in familiar speech. The Christian priests adopted the term; and in the fourth century, in place of your Reverence, or your Grace, almost every ecclesiastic was entitled "Domine papa," (lord—father). We find several letters of Gregory I., in which he addresses the Gallican bishops as Domini papa,—a sufficient proof the title was not yet engrossed by the head of the church. Two hundred years later the bishops of Rome subscribe themselves *papa urbis Romæ*, as a title peculiar to themselves. By the eighth century the power of the Roman church had so increased, that the prelates subject to it hesitated to call their chief by so simple a term as "Papa," so they reverently prefixed a *Sanctus* to it; though Sanctus then implied nothing more than "reverend." From this arose the modern title, "His Holiness the Pope."

entitled. "Papæ" (popes), and "œcumenical bishops," or sometimes both titles, were merged in that of "œcumenical (or 'universalis') pope." The head of the Roman church showed growing preference, however, for that of *pontifex maximus*,* first adopted by Theodosius (642-49), in a Bull, excluding Paulus, patriarch of Constantinople, from fellowship in the orthodox faith;† and the succeeding popes constantly affixed it to their signatures, occasionally adding "Vicarius Christi" (though this had been already adopted by the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Antioch). They further distinguished their bishopric as the "Sedes Apostolica"‡ (Apostolic See). All these titles were subordinate in papal favour to that of "Pontifex Maximus," and "Universalis Papa," which enjoyed equal esteem with the Roman bishops, who from the ninth century have claimed both, according their colleagues but that of "my brother," or "my Christian brother." [Theodosius, who adopted the title of Pontifex Maximus, was the last bishop of Rome who allowed himself to be addressed as "my brother."]—Since the commencement, indeed, of the ninth century, both appellations have been constantly employed; bishops and archbishops, kings and emperors, alike according them

* Pontifex, from *posse et facere*, "to do," and "to be able." The ancient Romans had a kind of ministry of public worship, the president of which was entitled Pontifex Maximus. The Christian popes assumed the heathen title without any compunction as to its source.

† The doctrinal question to which this Bull had reference, concerned a dual will in Christ, together with his divine and human natures. Theodosius was so excited by the dispute that he wrote this retributive Bull, not in ink, but in sacerdotal wine.

‡ All prelates, whose sees had been founded by one of the apostles, employed this term. It is marvel, therefore, that the popes did so.

to the successor of the apostles, except Charlemagne, who stood not upon such ceremony.* His son, however, Louis the Pious, made rich amends, addressing Pope Eugenius as "Most holy and reverend Father, High priest, and universal Pope. When princes thus enthroned the idol, their subjects might well fall down and adore it.

By the end of the ninth century, the bishops of Rome, or popes, as we may henceforth call them, had fully resolved their plan of operations. They had been originally simple chief elders, then bishops, then metropolitans, then patriarchs, then universal popes. The idea of their absolute spiritual autocracy was perfectly well defined to the episcopal imagination, and the line traced by which the goal should be reached; but the idea as yet had found no expression in facts, and the monarchical power and religious absolutism subsequently won, was but dimly visible in the dream land of the future. The bishops of Rome were still dependent on a temporal ruler; and whilst they so remained, it was not possible for them to acquire complete authority over their clergy; for the bishops and archbishops of each country were always but too disposed to throw themselves on the support of their temporal rulers, whenever they were at variance with the holy father at Rome.

In studying the history of the church, it is essentially necessary to distinguish the period during which great part of Italy was still held by the Byzantine emperors, from that when the Frankish kings and their successors

* The Great Kaiser wrote: "Carolus D. G. rex Francorum et Longobardorum, et Patricius Romæ Leoni Papæ perpetuam in Christi salutem."

were masters of Rome. In the first period the dependence of the church on the temporal power was too notorious to be questioned. Constantine II. had even deposed Liberius, the heir of him who had baptised Constantine the Great, and drove him from Rome on a question of doctrine. Bishop Martin, in 654, was seized in Rome, and exiled to Naxos by the Emperor Constans, and had fared worse, but for the intercession of his old enemy, the patriarch of Constantinople. During this period the Greek emperors assumed the real supremacy of the church, prescribed not only its ceremonies, but its very articles of faith. Gregory the Great wrote, "I have humbly shown all obedience to the emperor (Mauritius);" though that very emperor had sorely galled the bishop of Rome, by according the title of "Universal Patriarch" to his rival of Constantinople.

With the conquest of Rome and central Italy, the popes did but change masters; they acquired larger estates than of old, and the Frankish monarchs proved more pious and tractable lords than those of Byzantium. Charlemagne had been crowned at Rome, his successors followed his example; and proved not unwilling to gratify the dispenser of the sacred oil with certain concessions, and to let them follow their own devices in church affairs. Yet they were still Rome's suzerain, and no bishop there could wear the mitre without first taking the oath of allegiance. The clearest proof of this was afforded by the regulation regarding papal elections, enacted anno 825: it had been customary in earlier times that the bishops or presbyters should

be elected by each Christian community from among the general body of its members; the nobles, and still more the clergy, soon, however, acquired a preponderating influence on such occasions, and at length the suffrages of the common people were reduced to the mere right of acceptance, with more or less acclamation, of the person chosen by the self-constituted "committee of election." It is readily conceivable that when two or more factions were represented by their respective candidates, murder and every kind of violence, was often enough the accompaniment of their proceedings, as was especially the case at the election of Pope Eugenius I. (824-27); so that King Louis the Pious sent his son to Rome to restore peace there, if possible, and effect some definite regulations for the future.

In consequence of the royal orders, Pope Eugenius proceeded to draw up the following oath, to be administered to the electors at all future papal elections:—

"I promise and swear by the Almighty God, the four Evangelists, by the cross of our Saviour, and the body of the blessed St. Peter, that from this time forth I will show all true devotion and allegiance to our lord the emperor, without prejudice to the faith I have promised to our apostolic lord; that I will consent to no papal election which is not fully canonical,* and that whoso is thus canonically elected, shall not yet be so with my consent, until he hath first taken the oath of

* Canonical according to the statutes of the church. The Greek word *kanon* signifying direction—rule of procedure; a canonical election is, therefore, fulfilling all required formalities.

fealty instituted by Pope Eugenius, for the general good and well being, in the presence of the ambassadors and plenipotentiaries of his Majesty the emperor."

Does not this sufficiently prove the vassalage of the popes to the emperors of the Franks? But enough; if the reader has perused our first book with attention, he must already be convinced of this.

CHAPTER II.

THE PAPACY IN ITS GLORY — PSEUDO-ISIDORE — THE THREE GREAT REPRESENTATIVE POPES.

I.—Pseudo-Isidore.

The idea of a papal monarchy began to take existence in the eighth century, and had gained definite self-consciousness by the ninth. The popes and their partisans —all, in fact, who had anything to gain by papal supremacy—thenceforth studied day and night over the plans by which the power of Rome should be still enlarged, and finally gain its triumphant realisation. The sovereignty of the Roman church over Western Christendom, was already then very generally acknowledged; but again and again opponents would arise; and many an archbishop, when indisposed to submit to the papal mandate, would laconically demand upon what grounds the bishop of Rome founded his claims to supremacy. How were these refractory brethren to be answered? So long as any temporal sovereign, especially Charlemagne, his sons, and the German kaisers, their successors, held supreme influence in the elections of the popes, and regarded the successors of St. Peter as their subjects, a Papal monarchy could not be contemplated "a government by royal Veto," or Theocratic universal des-

potism. What course was then to be taken? The bishops of Rome, and their satellites, were well aware but two alternatives were possible to gain their end—force or fraud; and knowing in the utter ignorance and superstition of the western world, any pretensions might be advanced without exciting doubt or endangering contradiction, they discreetly resolved on the second alternative—they determined to carry out a very masterpiece of forgery and false evidence.

There had been no church statutes in the early days of Christianity, for the simple reason, there had been no church in the sense of an organised ecclesiastical system. Necessarily, certain general religious rules had after a time grown up, adopted for the most from those communities which still preserve the traditionary examples of their apostolic founders. These rules were called *kanones*, and by the second century had been carefully collated, so that each new established church might have definite indications for its guidance. These canons, or social statutes, were by no means the same in the several mother churches, and their offspring; diversities in them were very frequent, especially regarding the celebration of Easter, the baptism of heretics, &c.; and these diversities were further increased, as many heathen observances were constantly introduced into the Christian ritual by the new converts. Copies of their respective canons were mutually interchanged, however, between the churches; and though frequent and very warm disputes occurred, still opposing rules were harmonised as well as might be. One community would often complete their own set of canons by borrowing

from another, whilst a third employed this or that custom according to the practice of a fourth.

Besides these tacitly accepted rules, there were the decrees of the synods and councils, which, as we have already seen from the divergences of opinion among the early Christians, were very numerous, even in the second century; then there were the episcopal pastoral letters, for guidance in the internal discipline and general doctrines of the various churches. Church law soon began to take an organised form, and naturally the general collection of the canons as well as the rules laid down by councils and synods, were recognised as part of ecclesiastical jurisprudence. The greatest weight was, of course, attached to those canons which could be traced back to any of the apostles or their immediate disciples; such an origin was at once sufficient to command respectful recognition. Bishop Boniface II. ordered a complete collection of all canons, decrees of council, and regulations on points of spiritual discipline to be made by the learned monk Dionisius,* who was abbot of a monastery in Rome from anno 530 to 556. In his collection were included the so-called "Canones Apostolicæ" and the "Constitutiones Apostolicæ;" apostolic rules of Church government and Christian morality supposed to be either immediately derived from the apostles, or actually inscribed by their own hand. The latter pretension is evidently unfounded, as a great many are cited which were notoriously first promulgated

* He called himself Dionisius Exiguus (the insignificant) in his humility. From him we derive the Dionisian reckoning—the computation of time from the birth of Christ.

in the fifth century; the world, however, reverently accepted all as genuine.* How, indeed, in the utter absence of historical criticism, would it have been possible to distinguish the true from the false. Nor need we suppose any intentional falsification. Dionisius probably adopted the various traditions of the apostles handed down generation after generation, century after century, and recorded them in all simplicity as established facts. A further collection of canons, "Collectio canonum ecclesiæ Hispaniæ," was made by the learned Bishop Isidore of Seville,† and though necessarily of a local character, they soon obtained great authority beyond Spain, and were subsequently enlarged and completed. The work has now great historical value, recording, as it does, the contemporary usages and observances of the church, the powers held by the bishops and metropolitans, and the duties demanded from them.

Of a very different nature was a larger edition of canons and episcopal edicts made about the middle of the ninth century, and which bore the name of the good Bishop Isidore of Seville on its title page; it was the work now known as the "Pseudo-Isidore,"‡ a tissue of falsehoods contrived to serve the worldly ambition of the papacy. Who really fabricated this new ecclesiastical

* The patriarchs of Constantinople and the other eastern prelates refused to acknowledge the authenticity of the first fifty canons, and they are still held as spurious by the Greek Church.

† As Seville was then called Hispala, he is generally known as Isidorus Hispalensis. Isidore wrote several theological works, and a history of the Goths from A.D. 176 to 688. He died at Seville, anno 636.

‡ The author was also called "Isidorus Mercator, or Peccator," the "chafferer and sinner."

codex is now quite unknown, though assuredly not he whose name it bore. It matters to us very little who was the forger, or whether he was, as many have supposed, a certain dean of Mayence cathedral, or if more than one person was concerned in it, the forgery itself need alone occupy us.

What is the purport of this "pseudo-Isidore?" Simply an exaltation of the Papacy into an universal monarchy over all Christendom. It declares "that God gave authority over Heaven and earth to the Roman see, that the pope is the sole bishop of the Catholic (universal) church, all others being but his agents and vicars, that to him, as the successor of St. Peter, it belongs to judge his brethren, that in every theological question appeal should be made to him as supreme guide, and that neither synod nor council, or any convocation of the church in its collective capacity shall have authority when not convened by papal command, and its acts authenticated by papal approval." All this was now boldly set forth as "irrefragable church canons;" nor was the author yet satisfied; he further adds, "all earthly sovereignties are properly subordinate to the papal," and says, literally rendered, "Jesus Christ alone is king and priest, and after him cometh the pope, whose power surpasseth that of kings, for kings must be consecrated through the popes, who have to render an account of the acts of kings before the Judgment Seat of God.* That the church, founded as it was by Christ

* "Solus Dominus Jesus Christus, Rex et Sacerdos, post vere dignitas Pontificum major quam Regum, quia Reges sacrantur a Pontificibus et hi pro Regibus rationem in devino examine reddituri sunt."

himself, is necessarily independent of all earthly potentates, that Christ alone, or his vicegerents, can hold authority over it, and therefore any infringement of the authority of the pope is an infringement on the omnipotence of God." In short, the canonical dogma was definitely enunciated. "Rex ego (Papa) sum Regum, lex est mea maxima legum;"* in plain English, "I, the pope, am king above all kings, my law is above all laws;" making the pope a rival or vice God, whose will it behoved all Christendom to obey without question; those who doubted his power would commit sacrilege; those who were guilty of an overt act against it, a crime to be expiated only by their death.

Such are the chief points of the "Pseudo-Isidore." It must be observed, however, the author does not enter the lists to announce such and such prerogatives must be granted the Apostolic Throne; he says, the "Apostolic Throne possesses them; these prerogatives were coeval with origin of the Church itself," existed as long as Christianity itself, and, in proof, cites certain decretals and synodial decisions from the first centuries after Christ's birth, in which precisely the same assumptions regarding the universal sovereignty of the church are made as those which began to take solid form in the eighth and ninth centuries. The new pretensions of the bishops of Rome are made as though they were but the reiteration of "old established rights." Until now, that is, until the middle of the ninth century,

* From this dogma later exponents of the Kanons have deduced the conclusion, "Papa est causa causarium,"—("the cause of causes"). Thence, also, the dogma, "Papa est supra jus, contra jus et extra jus,"—("the pope is above the law, against the law, and beyond the law").

no one had heard of these so-called "rights descended from the primitive centuries;" until now they had never been referred to in any collection of canons or recognised ecclesiastical statutes, but was their genuineness to be therefore questioned! especially as the popes speedily acted up to the new codex which Nicholas I. (858-67) positively certified as authentic. Could any one dare suggest forgery or interpolation, when the old decretals and canons included in the collection of Isidorus of Seville and Father Dionisius were also in the new codex, thus putting the stamp of truth on the entire compilation? Moreover, how little probable was any suspicion of such interpolation to present itself in an age of universal ignorance, when all classes were accustomed to yield the most implicit obedience to their spiritual guides? Yet how easy it would have been then for any one with some knowledge of history and the Latin tongue to have exposed the whole juggle!

Astounding enough it is how so shameless, so crude a tissue of lies as this Pseudo-Isidore could have been recognised for 600 years as the chief authority for the prerogatives of the church, bearing, as it did, its own refutation in well nigh every page. The collection commences with sixty letters from the earliest bishops of Rome, from Clement to Melchiades (anno 91 to 311), and attributes words and phrases to the holy men which were never in use earlier than the sixth century. Passages from the letters of Leo the Great and Gregory the Great (bishops of Rome) were quoted, though Leo had received the mitre in 440, and Gregory in 590, some centuries after the date supposed. To complete the an-

achronism these sixty letters were followed by certain edicts and canons, spurious and genuine mixed together, and in the former, which are all dated from the first centuries, reference is constantly made to "patriarchs, archbishops, and even to popes, though any conception of such dignitaries did not exist until several hundred years later, and the very titles had not yet been invented. The work is written in a Latin so corrupt that every leaf betrays its monkish origin; Germanisms and barbarous idioms of all kinds occur in it which were totally unknown to Italy of those first three hundred years. To complete the absurdity, passages from the Bible are quoted word for word after the translation of St. Jerome, which had not been completed until anno 400, and several citations even from works written in the seventh century.

There can, in fact, be no question as to the spuriousness of the book: the only point contestable is the actual date of its appearance. On the papal side, it was attributed to Bishop Isidore, of Seville, to give it greater moral credit; and possibly, the majority of believers in the ninth and tenth centuries fully accepted this explanation. We, however, may feel assured it was not written before anno 830, as there are decrees cited in it pronounced by the Synod of Paris in 829. Again; it could not have appeared after 857, as Charles the Bald appealed to "this monster historical sham," as Weber calls it in that year, but in such a manner, that we may conclude it was already well known. The Pseudo-Isidore was thus probably fabricated between 830 and 857. There only then remains the question,—who was the

fabricator? The reader will need little aid in finding an answer. Who would derive the greatest advantage from such a work?—the bishops of Rome; therefore, it needs but little acumen to conclude that, if they did not actually write it with their own hands, to them its inspiration was due. The monstrous pretence of the Emperor Constantine's gift to the successors of St. Peter made its appearance in the Pseudo-Isidore for the first time—alone a sufficient refutation of the book and its assumptions.

The popes made their contemporaries believe in the Pseudo-Isidore;* and by the Pseudo-Isidore convinced the world the papacy had been founded by Christ himself; by it, succeeded in putting their foot on the necks of kings and their vassals alike, and established an universal sovereignty unprecedented in the history of the world. They succeeded in this; but what were the results likely to follow?

* The Pseudo-Isidore is still the basis of papal canon law. When, for example, towards the middle of the twelfth century, the Camaldulensian monk, Franciscus Gratianus, discontinued his studies in the monastery of St. Francis, at Bologna, to edit his "Concordia canonum discordiantium," (concluded in 1150), he took the whole Isidore collection, true and false; and the popes not only approved his book, but recommended it as a work on ecclesiastical law to the various universities. This "Concordantia" was subsequently entitled, "Decretum Gratiani:" and thus the Pseudo-Isidore became the foundation of Catholic canonical law; for the additions made subsequently, viz., the five books of papal edicts collected by Raimond de Pennefort, 1234, at the command of Gregory IX., the sixth book, added under Boniface VIII., 1298, and the seventh under Clement V. (1313), from their inferior importance were entitled the "extra," as a mark of their lesser import.

II.—Nicholas I., called the Great, 858—867.

The Church Ban.

The first pope who completely conceived the full meaning of his title, and the first who officially recognised the Pseudo-Isidore as canon law, and so employed it, was Pope Nicholas I. A Roman by birth, he united in his person the pride of the Spaniard, the cunning of the Greek, and the resolution of the Englishman. He treated bishops as his menials, deemed the Christian world his vassal kingdom, addressed princes as their king, and kings as though he were an incarnate divinity. The German emperor, Ludwig, fell so completely under the glamour, that on visiting Rome, when the pope came forth to meet him he reverently dismounted, to lead, for a full bow shot, the steed bestrode by the ecclesiastical potentate.

By four things chiefly did Nicholas assert his claims, not as a mere chief bishop, but as supreme suzerain of the West:—his coronation; his conduct towards the patriarchs of Constantinople; his victory over the French bishops; and lastly, by his influence over the temporal sovereigns of his time.

The coronation* of the popes originated, indeed, with

* It is curious to observe, and we shall subsequently often have occasion to do so, that the popes and their church have borrowed all the ceremonies of Romanism alike from the Persians, Indians, Egyptians, Greeks and Romans. The crown worn by the ancient monarchs of Persia, Herodotus tells us, was called a tiara: that adopted by the popes is only an imitation of it. The latter bears three jewel-covered diadems, the topmost one surmounted by a ball and cross of gems. It is worth several hundred thousand pounds. Such is the tiara at present;

Nicholas I. He it was who first had the papal crown placed on his brow within St. Peter's. No previous Roman bishop probably ever contemplated such a triumph, or if he had, his subjection to the emperor must have left his dreams without hope of fulfilment. Nicholas I. made the emperor, or rather the weakness and bigotry of the emperor, the most effective tool to his ambition; and his coronation was accomplished in the presence of Ludwig II., then staying at Rome. * The original crown was, we confess, of far simpler character than the tiara* of modern days, which is perfectly incrusted with gems, and symbolises the wearer's jurisdiction over earth, heaven and hell.

But the point of chief import was not the mere gold and glitter of the tiara; it was that, unlike the episcopal mitres the earlier popes had worn, the triple crown was distinguished by those symbols of majesty which de-

that of Nicholas was less pretentious. If we may trust ecclesiastical legend, it was the very crown sent to Rome by King Chlodwig, on his conversion. Boniface VIII., the founder of the "Year of Jubilee," first assumed a double round of royalty, to symbolise his authority over both worldly and spiritual things. Clement V. added the third crown, thus announcing the pope as head and representative of the suffering, struggling, and triumphant church. The triple tiara is also called the "Regnum," *i.e.*, sovereignty over the world.

* The episcopal mitre was derived from the mitra,—oriental designation for a peculiar turban-like cap, worn by certain of the Asiatics. In the East, it was called an "infuI," or infula,—a Latin designation for a white woollen head cloth, which the priests and vestals of heathen Rome bound about their heads, after the fashion of the orientals. This practice passed to the Christian priesthood on the conversion of Italy to Christianity. "Infulire," is to grant permission to assume a mitre. This right of granting was retained by the popes in their own hands, and many an abbot and prior procured the mitre—thanks to a heavy purse.

clared to the world that he who wore it was chief and king over all other bishops. Succeeding pontiffs grasped fully the typical meaning of the coronation, and each directed its celebration in such imposing wise, that the solemnities employed by the emperors on assuming their crown, scarce equalled in splendour those contrived by the popes. In illustration, we need but recal the coronation of Pope Boniface VIII. (1295), when Apostolic majesty proceeded to St. Peter's at the head of a gorgeous procession,—the King of Apulia holding his bridle on the right hand, the King of Naples on the left; or the coronation of Paul II. (1464), who, having caused the tiara to be so incrusted with gems, and arrayed himself in such sumptuous, effeminate apparel, that a spectator might have imagined the Phrygian goddess, Cytherea, was indulging in a triumphal procession with a tower of diamonds on her head; or that of Pope Leo X., in 1515, which was conducted with so reckless a profusion, that the money scattered among the people in the streets, alone amounted to more than a million florins.

But we must return to Nicholas I., and his policy towards the patriarch of Constantinople, and we shall find as striking proof of his tact, as of his ambition. We have already seen, that when the patriarchates of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria, had been swept away in the Mohammedan conquest, the rival sees of Rome and Constantinople were alone left to contest the primacy of Christendom.

Each endeavoured again and again to obtain mastery over the other, but neither had yet succeeded. It happened, however, that in the time of Pope Nicholas I.,

the Greek patriarch, Ignatius, having insulted an ambassador of the Emperor Michael, he was deprived of his dignities, and Photius, the commander of the imperial body-guard, put in his place by the Emperor Michael.

Then issued a threatening schism among the subject-bishops of the patriarchate: some held to Ignatius; others to Photius; both factions anathematising each other to the best of their power, though without any farther result. Photius, though a layman, had this point in his favour; he had actual possession of the patriarchal chair; and, moreover, the better to overcome his opponent, he determined to secure the good-will of the bishop of Rome, hoping thus the opposition of the other bishops would be much more easily allayed. He, doubtless, did not reflect, that such an appeal to the Roman Court implied, to a certain extent, the recognition of its supreme right of judicature; he was simply bent on gaining the patriarchal dignity, quite indifferent to the future cost of his triumph. Nicholas saw the matter from a very different point of view, and when the Emperor Michael, at the instance of his favourite, sent an embassy to Rome to inform the pope of the deprivation of Ignatius, and negotiate his recognition of Photius as successor, Nicholas avoided giving any definite reply, and declared the question must be investigated by his legates. Thus seizing the opportunity offered to play the supreme arbiter over the eastern church, as his predecessors had more or less successfully done over the western.

Papal legates arrived at Constantinople, bringing with them several letters from their master for the emperor

and Photius, and proposed commencing their investigations; but the Emperor Michael quite disarranged their plans on finding they were not prepared to recognise Photius at once; he had them seized, and thrown into a wretched dungeon, where the unfortunate diplomatists were left for more than three months, and threatened, if they longer opposed his wishes, they should be carried into some desolate land, and left to perish of misery and hunger. Brought to a more amenable frame of mind by these proceedings, the legates finally acknowledged Photius as patriarch, at a council summoned at Constantinople, which was attended by three hundred and eighteen bishops.

In the meantime Ignatius made his way to Rome, and besought his spiritual brother there to refuse all countenance to the sacrilegious captain of the body-guard. He had previously written to Nicholas on the subject, addressing him as the "Most Sacred President and Patriarch of all Episcopal Sees, the successor of the Prince of the Apostles, and Universal Pope." This was much more than ever Photius proffered, and Nicholas at once espoused the cause of the deposed dignitary, in the anticipation that should success attend his advocacy, supremacy over the whole Eastern church would be his reward. He called a great synod at Rome, stated the case to the assembled prelates, and Photius was denounced as an "intruder within the church," declared "incapable of holding any priestly function or dignity; and further, should he persist in retaining the patriarchal chair, he should be excommunicated, and held as a heathen; all those who in any way might

aid and abet him, should have no part in the body and blood of Christ (the sacrament) until death." Ignatius was then formally recognised as the rightful patriarch; "and all who might in any way hinder him in the discharge of his functions, anathematised to all eternity."

It was an excommunication in the fullest meaning of the word, and Nicholas at once included in it his own two legates, who had recognised Photius in his name. But the result? Michael, on the advice of Photius, immediately convened another great Council at Constantinople, caused Pope Nicholas to be charged with the most flagrant sins, and rested not until it had excommunicated the Roman pontiff, and all those in any way connected with him. So ban followed ban with reciprocal thunder. Excommunication opposed excommunication, and anathema anathema. But of what avail was all this to Pope Nicholas? Did Photius therefore abdicate? Did it extend Roman supremacy one iota further? The results were very different; they were in the complete and lasting schism of the two churches;*

* It is true there are some slight doctrinal differences between the Greek and the Roman Catholics, as in the dogma of the Trinity; the former holding the Holy Ghost does not proceed from the Two Other Persons, and in the use of unleavened bread for the sacrament, the question of celibacy, &c.; but these differences were all too slight to have led to a separation. The originating cause of the schism was in the pretensions of the popes to supremacy over the patriarchate of Constantinople; and since the dispute with Nicholas and Photius, no lasting reconciliation has ever been effected.

The last and final separation occurred on July 24th, 1054, when Pope Leo IX. excommunicated Michael Cærularius, the Bull of anathema being read by the papal legates, Umbertus and Petrus, from the

a schism which still separates the Christianity of the east from that of the western world.

The third point by which Nicholas openly asserted his claims as pope and suzerain of Christendom, was in his treatment of the French bishops, when the most complete victory awaited him. It happened that a certain bishop, Rothadius of Soissons, was deposed by his metropolitan, Archbishop Hincmar of Rheims, but with the consent of a provincial synod summoned for the occasion. Rothadius appealed to the "Papa Universalis," and Nicholas I., well pleased at this opportunity of exercising his supremacy, commanded the archbishop to allow Rothadius to proceed to Rome, and either accompany him in person, or send some authorised representative, that after hearing both parties, he, the pope, might decide between them. Hincmar, however, not only refused to obey this behest, but caused Rothadius to be seized, thrown into prison, and ordained another bishop in his stead: Such an answer was little likely to satisfy Nicholas, and he immediately notified to all the bishops, participators in the guilty synod, that every appeal to the apostolic chair must be respected, under penalty of the ban; and therefore, if they did not immediately dispatch Rothadius to Rome, with proper ambassadors from their own body, that the case might be fully investigated, the same fate would befal them as

chancel of Santa Sophia. Since then many attempts have been made at re-union, but they have always failed. After Russia became Greek-Catholic, its conversion being effected by St. Wladimir, in 988, all hope of reconciliation might have been renounced, as the question of supremacy would always offer an effectual stumbling block.

that which they had imposed on Rothadius. At the same time Hincmar was commanded to set his prisoner at liberty, or prepare for despotism and excommunication.

Hincmar, and his episcopal adherents unhesitatingly replied:—firstly, "that Bishop Rothadius had been condemned by the only tribunal fully competent to judge the case—the provincial synod presided over by his metropolitan; secondly, that according to the laws recognised in France since the days of the Emperor Charlemagne, no person condemned by synodal decision, could claim any right of appeal." The laws were clear enough on this point, and it might seem the pope would have a difficult task to controvert them. He appealed to the famous "Pseudo-Isidore," and proved from those convenient forgeries, that not alone were all laws enacted by temporal sovereigns at once rendered null and void the moment they came in conflict with the canons of the church (thus declaring the complete suzerainty of Rome), but that St. Peter's throne was placed above all provincial synods, national synods, or even œcumenical councils; and, therefore, all disputants on matters concerning the church, were bound to submit their differences, "unconditionally," and completely, for the pope's decision. Such doctrines were little palatable to Hincmar and his colleagues; but Nicholas pronounced them with such boldness, and quoted the spurious authorities with such perfect self-possession, declaring them true as the Holy Bible itself, that the synod, which apparently never dreamed of fraud in the matter, grew alarmed, fearing the pope might really

carry out his threats of excommunication, and overwhelm them in endless troubles and difficulties. Besides, Nicholas had appealed to Charles the Bald, son of Louis the Pious, and grandson of Charlemagne, and induced that weak-headed bigot both to espouse his cause and command "Rothadius to proceed to Rome, and explain his case there."

It seemed probable, that any longer misunderstanding with the pope would involve a quarrel with the king of France also; so Hincmar determined to set Rothadius at liberty, always "reserving" his own archiepiscopal prerogatives. This had scarcely been effected when a new brief arrived from Rome, to summon Rothadius thither on some matter of "high import" to him; and he, of course, lost no time in obeying. After cursory investigation of this case by certain high dignitaries, Nicholas decreed the restitution of his mitre to the deposed bishop in the most solemn wise, and his immediate reinvestiture with the see of Soissons. With this decree in his pocket, and accompanied by the papal ambassador extraordinary, Rothadius returned to France, and, thanks to the ambassador, succeeded in regaining his dignities. This was the first triumphant appearance of the famous Isidorian codex; for, though the French bishops might register their protests against the deductions drawn from it, and declare that every rule of Church government might thus be set at nought, and every evil doer in the priesthood incited to appeal to Rome against the decisions of his rightful judges, their protests were of very little account,—they were but so many empty words,

whilst the pope could point to an accomplished fact in the triumph of his will.

Nicholas was not less victorious in his struggle for supremacy with Lothair II. of Lorraine, and transmitted to all future popes a proof that their place was "above" all earthly kings and rulers. King Lothair, son of Kaiser Lothair I., and grandson of Charlemagne, had separated from his wife, Thulberga, and was very desirous to procure a formal divorce in order to marry a certain fair Valdrade. To assist this design, he charged Thulberga with an improper intimacy with a young noble of the court, and convened his parliament to decide the case. The queen, in the consciousness of her innocence, demanded the ordeal by boiling water, and passed triumphantly through it, though it was not her own royal hand that was plunged into the caldron to lift the ring from the bottom: in consideration of her rank she had been allowed a substitute to fulfil the test in her stead. In consequence of this divine manifestation, Lothair was obliged to desist from any further proceedings against his consort, but he continued to treat her so cruelly she was obliged to seek refuge with his uncle, Charles the Bald, of France. Lothair then gained over Archbishop Guenter, of Cologne, and Teutgaut of Trêves, and they having summoned a synod at Aächen, he demanded from it a formal divorce from his fugitive spouse; and the monarch's desire was speedily complied with. The justice or legality of these proceedings can scarcely now be determined; but there is little doubt the royal treasury felt severely the cost of episcopal

pliancy. Be this as it may, Lothair was unwedded by synodal decree, and immediately afterwards united to Valdrade. But he was not to come off so lightly. Thulberga, by the advice of King Charles, lost no time in appealing to Nicholas, and entreated him with "tearful letters" (*lacrimosis literis*, for so the pope called them) to grant her his support. Such an opportunity of enacting the judge over a royal offender was not to be lost; for though the predecessors of Nicholas had uttered no word at the three or four divorces by which Charlemagne relieved himself of successive consorts, and totally ignored his many concubines, Nicholas well knew he had no Carolus Magnus in Lothair; besides, time had brought great changes since the death of the redoubtable emperor. He forthwith sent two legates to the court of Lothair, and informed the king they were fully empowered to investigate this subtle business of the divorce, adding, "Lothair and his consort shall present themselves before a synod appointed by said legates, when he the Pope will decide on the validity or non-validity of the divorce." The legates, immediately on their arrival in Lorraine, proceeded to call a national synod at Metz, at which the archbishops of Cologne and Trêves both attended; and their influence, with that of the royal gold, worked so convincing on the papal representatives, and on the majority of the members, that a very different decision was arrived at to that anticipated at Rome. The synod of Metz fully confirmed the acts of its predecessor at Aächen, and recognised Valdrade as the legitimate consort of the king. Lothair at length hoped to enjoy the society of his new wife in peace, and

despatched archbishops Guenter and Teutgaut to announce the important verdict. Nicholas had, however, been kept so well informed of all that passed by his spies, that their graces were not a little surprised by the manner of the reception awaiting them. The pope, in fact, at once summoned a synod at Rome, when all the decisions made by that of Metz were rescinded,—a ban of excommunication pronounced against the two legates and the two archbishops as abettors of adultery. They were deprived of all their dignities, and pronounced incapable from thenceforth of sitting in any ecclesiastical court, or administering any ecclesiastical affairs.

Such an employment of prerogative (the pope pronounced judgment without having instituted any inquiries—without hearing either witnesses or defendants) greatly incensed the archbishops; and, as the emperor, Louis II., brother of Lothair, was then holding his court at Benevento, previous to commencing a crusade against the Saracens, they hastened to lay their grievances before him;—how they had been disgraced, without the consent of their sovereign or a national synod, by an act, in open defiance of all ecclesiastical precedent,—one, too, which would really constitute the pope the supreme power in Christendom. Probably, feeling the justice of the reclamation, the emperor at once addressed a letter of remonstrance to the pope, but Nicholas was immovable; and then his lord suzerain (for as such the emperor regarded himself) resolved to go in person to Rome, and bring this refractory vassal to a more becoming frame of mind.

Louis proceeded to Rome with queen, court, and army,

and pitched his camp at no great distance from St. Peter's, where His Holiness had taken refuge. The Romans, as on all like occasions, were divided into two factions,—the one friendly, the other hostile to the pope; whilst the latter was giving vent to their triumph, the former went in solemn procession to St. Peter's, entreating heaven to turn the heart of the emperor. The pious cortège came by chance into conflict with the imperial guards; the latter had recourse to their weapons, and a good many banners and crosses got broken in the fray. This sacrilege terribly embittered the partisans of Nicholas, especially as among the damaged crucifixes was one containing a fragment of the true cross. A soldier died, too, that night; and the idea spread quickly among the people that the wrath of God would sweep away the blasphemous spoilers. Fortune decreed the emperor should fall ill of a fever the next day; and as he, like all the descendants of Louis the Pious, was very bigoted and superstitious, he allowed himself to be persuaded by his still more superstitious consort that the anger of the Almighty had fallen on him, and his only hope of escape from death was, by reconciliation with the pope. The empress proceeded forthwith to assure His Holiness he might quit his sanctuary without danger, and at the same time arrange an interview between him and her husband. The interview took place; its consequences may easily be imagined. The Carlovingian was readily enough outwitted by a Nicholas. He dutifully promised his support against Lothair, and to withdraw all countenance from the two archbishops, who now found but cold hospitality in the imperial

court. Both prelates formally protested and excommunicated the pope, leaving the brief of anathema on St. Peter's shrine, and endeavoured, on returning to their sees of Cologne and Trêves, to resume their sacred functions as before. Here they were met with fresh humiliations: King Lothair, at the command of his brother, through whose intercession he hoped to make peace with the pope, now forcibly deposed his former friends. Even this act of servility proved of no use to the craven tyrant, Nicholas, fully awake to the puppet impotence of his late antagonist, now denounced the ban of the church against Valdrade, and threatened to include the king in it also, if he continued to treat her as his wife; even threatened to absolve the Franks from their oath of allegiance,—for, "no vassal need obey him who defied the will of God!" The last menace had the required effect. Lothair succumbed in terror, for his person and crown; and the pope's resoluteness won a triumph greater than any obtained by his boldest predecessors,—he compelled a temporal sovereign to humble himself at his behest. The world, cleric and lay, was not a little startled by such a phenomenon; but dame Valdrade being as much detested as Queen Thulberga was beloved, every one was well pleased at the defeet and disgrace of the venal archbishops: nor was the satisfaction less sincere in the humiliation of the contemptible despot, Lothair. Men thought not of the future; and papal arrogance was overlooked for the sake of the good it had been the means of achieving. But the world was soon disillusioned.

From thenceforth the popes continued to assert their

claims, not alone as supreme head of the church, but as a suzerain over every temporal monarch. Let us now observe the means Pope Nicholas employed in bringing Lothair to submission. They were merely in the excommunication of Valdrade and threat of excommunicating her royal lover. With so great a power thus lying in the "ban," it is time we should investigate that which plays so redoubtable a part in papal history.

We have already, in our first book, seen the origin of excommunication and its effect in excluding the offender from the Christian brotherhood. It was originally employed only against heretics and criminals, and could not be pronounced but by the whole body of the faithful in each community. Subsequently exercised by the bishops in the name of their flocks, it soon became a very important arm in their frequent religious and canonical disputes. Every ecclesiastic eagerly availed himself of this fiat of "exclusion" against those who presumed to hold different views from his own on matters of church discipline or dogma. It must not be supposed the practice was a purely Christian invention; it came, like so many others, from the Jewish law, and was merely improved and amplified by the bishops. The Jews recognised two kinds of anathema: the first, "Niddui," the "lesser" curse enforced exclusion from the synagogue for thirty years; occasionally the sentence was made more severe by the additional prohibition against any of the faithful holding communication with the offender during that time; the ban was then called the "Cherim." If, after the lapse of the prescribed term, the excommunicate showed no signs of amendment, the second stage

commenced, "Schammatha," or "Anathema maranatha," complete and life-long exclusion from all intercourse with his nation, and destitution of political rights, pronounced with the most fearful imprecations. Originally the first degree was alone employed by Christians, for until Christianity became a state religion, the ban could not affect the political position of an offender. Later, the church amply repaid itself for its earlier enforced moderation, instituting the "greater," in addition to the lesser ban. The latter excluded the offender from the sacrament of communion, and from public worship; any bishop had authority to pronounce it, though it ceased as soon as the excommunicate had repented, or at least satisfied the penances imposed by church discipline. The "great anathema," or banishment from the spiritual fold of Christ throughout the world, could not be entrusted to every mere bishop; it remained in the keeping of the chief shepherds of the church, and soon became a terrible power in the hands of the patriarchs, especially those of Constantinople and Rome. The holy fathers took every means for increasing the severity of the penalties, especially by including in them the "exclusion from all public offices," and "loss of all rights of citizenship." The ceremonies employed in these denunciations, aided by the crass superstition of the middle ages, ensured their complete success. The excommunication was pronounced under curses so fearful that every believer might well shrink from them aghast, whilst the offender was made over to the devil to all eternity. One of the "anathemas," literally translated from the Latin, declares, "These sons of

Belial* shall be cut off as a rotten member from the body of Christ, driven from every church, and cast out from the brotherhood of Christians. They shall be excommunicated, and cursed in walking, in standing, in waking and sleeping, in going forth and in returning, in eating and drinking, even their food and drink, and the fruit of their loins, and all their possessions shall be cursed. They shall suffer all the plagues of Herod, which shall cease not until their bowels have burst asunder. They shall be hunted from the face of the earth, even as Dathan and Abiron, and descend among Satan and his devils, to be tortured without end through all eternity. Their children shall be orphans, their wives widowed; their children shall be carried away to far countries, that they (the accursed) may be left to beg their bread. Their fathers shall even be driven from their homes and possessions, and the CURSE OF THE NEW AND THE OLD TESTAMENT SHALL FALL ON THEM." Such was the anathema denounced by the holy father of Rome, Christ's vicegerent, He who preached love and charity. And though now any person of moderate intelligence can but laugh at the monstrous presumption of such claims by any one man over the future of another, the case was very different in the middle ages, when thought and knowledge were alike banished from Europe, when religion had become a mere outward formalism, and unlimited reverence, nearly approaching actual

* The author of this anathema was Pope Benedict VIII. (1012-24); he had fulminated it against certain persons who had deprived the Monastery of Clugni of some of its lands. It may be read in letter, still extant, from Benedict to Archbishop Burchardt of Lyons.

worship, was accorded to the pope and higher dignitaries of the hierarchy. A man so cursed might well expire of very terror; he was an outlaw, a castaway, with whom no good citizen or faithful Christian could hold converse, whose nearest kin his very wife and children were bound to renounce. In truth, the ban had such effects that not only several synods during the eighth and ninth centuries, especially one held at Pavia, solemnly declared that a person so accursed was incapable of holding any public office, and, in accordance with the pseudo-Isidore, became utterly degraded (ehrlos), forfeited all worldly possessions, was incapable of giving evidence, or bringing a suit at law: that his oath was null and void, that he could not devise any property by will: in one word, had ceased to be a member of the body politic, and could exercise no rights as such, and therefore whosoever should remove him like a rotten sheep from among the fold incurred no sin, but would well merit praise for the act.* Such were the consequences entailed by this anathema. The culprit became an object of loathing to all; servants, friends, kindred, turned from him as from a condemned felon; no one would supply him with the common necessaries of life, though he paid for them never so liberally: no one tended him in sickness, or closed his eyes in the hour of death. A coffin was placed at his threshold, he was hurriedly hidden in it and thrust underground in some lonely unconsecrated spot, for he was cursed in death, and this curse so clung to his body that the very ele-

* Pope Urban II. employed these words concerning Bishop Godfredo of Lucca, and thenceforth they were formally adopted.

ments refused to take back its atoms, and it was condemned to remain for ever a horror and a reproach. Such was the belief of those times, and the results were alike whether the offender were of high or humble rank; or, to speak more correctly, whether he was "of more or less elevated," for on the vulgar herd the pope had no anathemas to bestow; they could neither stand in the way of his ambition, nor be of any direct service to his plans. Excommunication was much the more overwhelming and electric in its action when a reigning sovereign was the victim, for his royal domains were made forfeit by it like the private property of an ordinary mortal; "he was deposed, his vassals absolved from their oath of allegiance, until such time as he had made his peace with Rome."

It will thus readily be conceived, how King Lothair, obstinate despot as he was, bowed so meekly beneath the hand of Nicholas. No previous pope had ever ventured on such a step, still less had dared menace refractory royalty with insurrection, and rupture of allegiance in its vassals; to him belongs the glory as inventor of the "king's ban," which proved the most terrible weapon ever wielded by mortal hand. All that subsequently was added to it, was but the completion, the perfection of original idea.

Yet excommunication or anathema naturally affected only certain specified individuals, and none but those actually under the sentence were liable to its penalties. When a king or prince regnant was excommunicated, the ban still did not extend beyond his person, though its purpose was, of course, to bring the offender in

speedy contrition to the foot of the papal throne. To secure this end more effectually, Nicholas contemplated exciting a rebellion among King Lothair's subjects; but the fact remained undecided, whether a nation could thus be revolutionised at the word of a pope, or so quickly as might seem desirable. So the hierarchs at Rome anxiously bethought them whether there might not be some means by which the subjects of an excommunicated sovereign could be forced into a renunciation of their allegiance; and then they invented the interdict, the crown and climax of the "king's ban."

The ancient Romans employed an interdict—a prohibition (interdicere) of water and fire; or, in other words, the banishment of the offender. According to papal law, an interdict of the church is a "suppression of all and every religious office and observance throughout a district or kingdom;" and this form of canonical discipline first came into active existence under Gregory V. (996-99), a worthy follower of the first Nicholas. King Robert of France had married a Princess Bertha, his own fourth cousin, and daughter of the king of Burgundy. Though a love match, it had the very practical advantage of bringing Burgundy to the French crown; and in consideration of this, perhaps, the French bishops were content to pass over the consanguinity of the pair, and grant the king full dispensation. Indeed, the archbishop of Tours, with a great number of his episcopal brethren, assisted at the marriage. So far all went well; but the fact of Burgundy lapsing to France was highly distasteful to Kaiser Otho III., and as the reigning pope was a German by extraction, and a rela-

tive of the imperial house, the emperor immediately demanded a synod should be convened at Rome, to declare the union of Robert and Bertha incestuous. Gregory V. obeyed, and bade the king of France to put away his consort under pain of excommunication, and perform a seven years' penance for the sin he had committed. The pope at the same time suspended the archbishop of Tours from his functions, as well as all the other prelates, present either at the marriage, or the synod which had granted the dispensation. A marriage within the fourth degree of affinity was solemnly prohibited, so declared the Isidorian decretal, and no dispensation for one valid, unless granted by the pope himself. The bishops and archbishop, probably remembering the fate of Hincmar, very quickly submitted, and were pardoned; the king set the pope at defiance, and refused to part from his wife. The pope threatened, and again threatened, even a third time; but Robert of France little heeded the menaces of Rome. Then Gregory thundered out sentence of interdict, not merely against the stiffnecked monarch and his consort, but against all France!

All France was declared under the ban, and from the moment when the thunderbolt launched from the Vatican fell, no single ordinance of the church could be performed throughout the whole land. Of course the pope could only hope to carry out a sentence of this kind when the clergy of the country were on his side; in this instance they unanimously were so, and he carried it out. At once every church door was closed, and the priests refused to perform any of their religious func-

tions. Nowhere—in city, village, or baronial castle,* was divine worship celebrated. There was neither baptism or marriage, nor pilgrimages, nor partaking of the sacrament of communion; chimes from church bells nor funeral processions, without sacred songs or penitential prayers, the dead were hidden away beneath unconsecrated ground; and new born babes, as no priest pronounced their admission into the Christian fold, were like the children of the heathen, delivered over to the power of Satan and sorcerors. All dances and public amusements were prohibited, the lover forbid to salute his mistress, the husband's embrace was cursed, friend meeting friend dared give no customary greeting. The whole country grew well nigh mad with terror, and the sick and the dying beheld eternal torments awaiting them in the next world, for they could hope for no absolution† in this.

What alternative was left the king! Queen Bertha threw herself on her knees at his feet, and besought

* Afterwards, when the interdict was more frequently employed, the popes mercifully, and for a "consideration," allowed certain religious offices to be fulfilled. Mass might be heard on payment of twenty-five ducats, for thirty a child baptised, and so forth. Money was still allowed to open the gates of heaven, even during an interdict; and only the poor or the miserly need fear the penalties of utter damnation. It is clear the popes understood fully the numismatic value of an interdict; how vast the sums derived from one were, may easily be imagined, when we remember that after its removal, every church, chapel, and miracle-working image, &c., had to be re-consecrated.

† We need feel no surprise the ignorant masses in those days of universal darkness believed in the efficacy of these papal curses, when the very clergy were self deluded. Bishop Gerhard, of Toul, who died in 944, having been under the necessity of pronouncing the lesser ban against certain knights guilty of highway robbery, always absolved

him to restore happiness to his country, by obedience to Rome. From all corners of France came news of the insurrections imminent, and the king at length had only two servants left to attend his person, who, however devoted, still carefully avoided tasting any food touched by their master. The very beggars refused anything that had been served at the royal table, or the clothes once worn by the excommunicated king, so both food and raiment were alike burned when not required by him. King Robert was thus forced to submision, and he submitted—though the struggle was a very hard one.

The interdict conquered him, as the mere threat of the anathema had overcome Lothair a hundred years earlier, and the popes learned how the great ones of the earth might be humbled in the dust at their footstool.

III.—Gregory VII. (1073-86) and Celibacy.

From the time of Nicholas I., no Roman pontiff had neglected to make his prerogatives felt, both as supreme head of the church, and chief of all earthly potentates. When, therefore, Charles the Bald, towards the close of his life, having gradually inherited all the possessions of his great ancestor, Charlemagne, and growing desirous to be crowned emperor, like him, the reigning pope, John VIII. (872-82) at once informed his majesty under what conditions he would conduct the ceremony, and the king, whose head was as scantily furnished inter-

them at eve, for fear they might die suddenly ere the morning, and as regularly cursed them again when it arrived. The loss of eternal salvation seemed to the good bishop too heavy a penalty for mere highway robbery.

nally as externally, at once consented to them. The succeeding popes acted in the same spirit. Gregory V., for example, of whom we have already spoken, Sylvester II. (999-1000), the arbiter of Hungary,* &c. Sylvester, ere attaining the papacy, had been a staunch opponent of the Isidorian decretal, but the tiara completely changed his views. The crowning triumph of his life, was the authorisation he gave Duke Stephen of Hungary to assume the Hungarian crown; for the duke's appeal to Rome upon the subject, became, at once, in the papal mind, a legal title for the future disposal of the new kingdom. Sylvester, of course, consented to crown Duke Stephen, giving him the title of "Apostolic Majesty," and a magnificent diadem, made expressly at Constantinople, as the artificers of the west were less gifted for such work. We cannot pretend in these scant pages, to enumerate all the proofs of humility given by each individual pope, and must confine ourselves to the acts of the three representative pontiffs whom we have called so, as they were the prototypes on whom all the rest moulded their conduct. A second representative, "papa universalis," though one far greater even than Nicholas I., was the famous Gregory VII., that Napoleon among popes—and the reader, who knows anything of the great Corsican, can readily understand what might be expected from a pope of a like mould.

In the year 1020 a certain blacksmith of Poana, in

* Sylvester II. was a very learned man, formerly a monk of Ancillac, and afterwards tutor to Otho III. His protégé, Duke Stephen, was afterwards canonised by Gregory VII. for his docility in soliciting the crown from the pope.

Tuscany, had a son born to him whom he christened Hildebrand, and shortly afterwards made over to the care of his maternal uncle, abbot of a monastery in Rome. As the boy grew up weakly in person, but of singular intellectual capacity, his guardian resolved he should enter a monastic order. Hildebrand received the tonsure at Rome, studied with unwearied perseverance, and whilst still a lad gave indications of the genius which was to subjugate the world. There was one religious fraternity still distinguished for its strict discipline and rigid piety in marked contrast to the rest, which were, without exception, sunken in the lowest vice and licentiousness. The monks followed the stern rule of St. Benedict, and were usually called the Cluniacensi, from the renowned abbey of Clugny, from whence the reform of the order had originated. Hildebrand held it his mission to enter this order. He proceeded to Clugny to complete his studies, and the reader will well understand that whilst acquiring the unbending discipline of the establishment, he imbibed those principles of stern resolve to which he remained faithful his whole life; but ambition seems to have held a large share in the brain of this ascetic lad of twenty, for on hearing that a certain Hadrian, one of his school mates, had taken the first steps towards the highest ecclesiastical post at Rome, he immediately returned thither to test his own fortunes. Hildebrand speculated well. Hadrian, in 1044, "bought" the tiara of Benedict IX. (who, but twenty-three years of age, had already worn it during eleven), and the new pontiff assumed his dignities as Gregory VI., despite the rival pretensions of the bishop of Sabina, who claimed St.

Peter's chair as Sylvester III. Hildebrand was shortly afterwards appointed sub-deacon by Gregory, and though the office seemed but a humble one, it in reality opened a wide field to the aspirants' ambition. The youthful sub-deacon came into constant personal intercourse with the new pope, and used his peculiar opportunities both to establish his own influence, and study thoroughly the papal system of government, more especially to learn the whole truth of the demoralisation into which the vices of those who held St. Peter's chair, during the latter part of the preceding century, had plunged the Roman court. Unfortunately, the government of Gregory VI. lasted but a brief period. Kaiser Henry III. learning too much of the wild licentiousness prevalent in the Christian capital, proceeded thither and summoned a council at Subi, attended by nearly all the bishops of Italy, who, after brief consultation, formally deposed the three contemporary popes, Gregory VI., Sylvester III., and Benedict IX., as simonists and violators of the papal dignity, and for the sinfulness and shamelessness of their private life. Benedict sought safety in flight,*

* Benedict had been twelve years of age when a dominant patrician family at Rome elected him to the chair of St. Peter. His vicious precocity was so great, that at fourteen he was already an example of the worst depravity, as the succeeding pope, Victor III., unhesitatingly declared him. When murder, rape, and robbery became too flagrant under his rule to longer endurance, another patrician faction deposed him in favour of Sylvester III. Benedict escaped from Rome, but soon returned with sufficient force to drive away his rival. Some time afterwards fortune again favoured the latter, and the contest was carried on with varying success for several years, until Benedict finally got the upper hand, but at last, convinced his crimes had made his victory untenable, he consented to sell his tiara to Hadrian, or rather Gregory VI.

Sylvester consented to retire to his episcopal see of Sabina, Gregory was compelled to accompany the emperor to Germany. The career of Hildebrand seemed now, probably, closed for ever, but in this very deposition of Gregory lay the elements of his own future greatness. He voluntarily accompanied his patron into exile, and as the deposed pope generally resided at the imperial court, or followed the emperor on his numerous journeys, Hildebrand had good opportunity of studying the Germans, their institutions, and especially Kaiser Henry III. and his son, afterwards Henry IV. The latter he made the subject of close observation, and was soon convinced that though the lad was not wanting in intelligence, his character was both weak and thoughtless, arrogant in prosperity, yet easily depressed by misfortune, and never capable of firmness or resolution.

The German nation, comparing it, as he did, with his own, which then monopolised what little art and science was still to be found in the west, appeared to him miserably rude and barbarous; the people exhibited a certain amount of rough honour and truthfulness, but this made them but the more contemptible in the eyes of the astute priest educated to the use of the poison and the stiletto, whilst he beheld in these uncouth Tedeschi the conquerors and oppressors of his native land, and felt the hate which inspired his whole life grow but the more intense by the scorn with which it was united.

It then seemed little likely he would ever be in a position to influence the fate of Germany or Italy; for Gregory died, after some years passed in exile, and his protégé immediately withdrew from the world, to de-

vote himself to study and contemplation in the abbey of Clugny. After popes Clement II. (1046-47) and Damasus II., both Germans nominated by the emperor, had passed away (Damasus, indeed, reigned but twenty-three days, for, like Clement II., he was poisoned by Benedict, who had left his place of concealment to regain, if possible, the throne of St. Peter), the emperor, for the third time, appointed a German pope,—his cousin, Conrad des Salices, a son of Count Egersheim, of Alsace. Conrad assumed the name of Leo IX. On his way to Rome he visited the monastery of Clugny; and feeling much more fitted to wield a sword than a bishop's crosier, and totally ignorant of the state of affairs at Rome, he was not a little rejoiced to find a young monk in this very monastery, not only intimately acquainted with the public and private life of the city, but thoroughly informed on every particular of the papal system. Hildebrand was at once appointed to the same offices about the new pontiff that he had filled under Gregory VI.; and thus the son of the blacksmith for the second time returned to Rome, was successively made subdeacon, archdeacon, then legate, and finally cardinal,—his power mounting in like ratio—whilst as prime minister under Leo and his immediate successors he engrossed the chief power of the papacy in his own hands. Thus, he continued to govern during the pontificates of six popes, until he at length felt the right moment had approached, when he should be pope in his own right. It is singular, how rapidly the vicegerents of heaven vanished from the stage during his ministry. Cardinal Damiani, his contemporary, suggests they were each furnished with a "soothing draught,"

—an effectual quietus, directly any tendency at self-assertion against the vizier was manifested. Be this as it may, it is at least certain that Hildebrand ruled under Leo IX. (1048-55), under Victor II. (1055-57), Stephen X. (1058-61), Benedict X. (1058), Nicholas II. (1058-61), and Alexander II. (1061-73), and that every event of importance that happened in their pontificates must be regarded as originating with him. Before entering on a relation of these events, we must consider—"What was the object Hildebrand had in view, and by what means he sought its realisation," or we shall have no adequate conception of the most brilliant epoch of the papacy.

The answer may, perhaps, be most fittingly given in the words inscribed by his own hand:—"Ut papæ nomen unius sit in orbe Christiano." Hildebrand dreamed of a universal monarchy—a pope, autocrat alike over spiritual and worldly thrones and dominions. The State should bow to the altar, the whole world become his vassal feoff, and he the representative of God himself. Nicholas I. had laboured for this end, but not with the same definite consistency as his greater successor. Hildebrand, or rather Gregory VII., found the work before him ably prepared. The Isidorian decretal, so triumphantly introduced by Nicholas, was now reverently accepted in almost every country throughout the whole West; it was regarded as the exponent of laws to which the most unquestioning obedience was due. The dogma of the anathema and interdict, though sometimes contested, was still a spell mighty enough to make kings kiss the rod. The belief was universal throughout Christendom, that a

country under the church ban was as completely given over to the powers of hell as any single culprit under excommunication, and necessarily remained so until absolved by the pope: this belief it was which secured the subjection of the world to the see of Rome.*

* Such weapons, however terrible, might still have proved inadequate to the realisation of Hildebrand's designs, had he not succeeded in binding down the whole body of the catholic priesthood in irrevocable slavery to the papal throne, and thus secured complete sway over the conscience of every man and woman throughout Western Christendom; and he accomplished this through the establishment of celibacy.

Celibacy is now understood to mean the unmarried state of the priesthood. It originally bore a very different signification,—from *cœlum* (heaven) the word was derived, and implied the devotion of a man's life to heaven. The Egyptians and Indians of old had considered a solitary, chaste, contemplative existence, as a high grade of virtue; and Christianity adopted the opinion the more readily, since Christ himself, and the greater number of his apostles, had never married. The political position of the Christians in the earlier centuries, when constantly exposed to persecution, was little of a character to induce marrying or giving in marriage. Many were even driven, by necessity, to solitary places, where they could alone devote themselves, undisturbed, to the pious exercises of their faith. Thus the first so-called cœlibes originated, and, as "self-castrated," were greatly honoured by their fellow-believers. To acquire the same degree of reverence, a great many bishops and presbyters definitely renounced marriage; and thus the belief became gradually generalised among the faithful, that unwedded priests were far holier than wedded ones: to have no wife, was to be chaste. It came to pass, after a century or two, that priests' wives were looked upon as clerical concubines, and the priest possessing one was called, in contempt, a "concubinarius." Of course, the ascetic disciplinarians reflected not, that this was in direct defiance of the church dogma, which pronounces marriage to be one of the sacraments. Many of the "fathers" and episcopal dignitaries, especially in the West (in the East the priesthood refused all countenance to this perversion of celibacy) took up the question of the non-marriage of the priests with great energy, holding, they would become, by adoption of the new doctrine, so much the more pure of life, and emancipated from attachment to the things of this world. The object proposed in establishing

It was a heavy task this that Gregory assumed, and so much the heavier, since in many countries a great majority of the clergy were married; and moreover, in every collection of church canons a certain statute, passed by the synod of Sangra in the fourth century, was included, by which any person declaring a married priest improper to fulfil his sacred functions, was threatened with excommunication. Undeterred by such obstacles, Hildebrand continued to work out his plans of universal monarchy. Leo IX. and Stephen IX. were made to issue stringent edicts against priests' marriages, so that the crowning act might be properly prepared for. Scarcely had Gregory secured his seat on the throne (1074), than he convened a synod at Rome, where, by his command, it was decreed that:—I. No married priest should perform any spiritual office. II. That all persons of the laity present at such a celebration should be subject to penalties. III. Married priests

an unmarried priesthood, up to this time, had been merely a moral and religious one. No law, no canon to effect it, had ever existed; or, perhaps, had ever been contemplated, even in theory, until the great Hildebrand took the matter into consideration, and at once felt its capability for a very different application to any yet foreseen. He felt that, so long as priests had wives and children they would be more or less subservient to the government under which they lived, and dependent on the temporal ruler from whom they received their office, and by whose good-will they retained it; and he boldly declared, "the Church could never be released from slavery to the laity until the Priesthood were set free from women." ("Non liberari potest ecclesia a servitute laicorum, nisi liberentur prius clerici ab uxoribus.") Such were the words of the pope; and they adequately prove it was not on merely moral grounds he founded his scheme, but in the purpose of rendering the church entirely independent of the state, so that the whole army of priests throughout the world might have no interests to compete with those of their profession, that is, the interests of the church, Roman and pontifical.

(whom he designated as *concubinarii*) should put away their wives. And, IV. That no priest in future should receive ordination unless with the solemn promise to remain unwed.

Assuredly no decree could be more offensive to the instincts of humanity: but Gregory was not the less capable of insuring its triumph. At first it excited a very menacing amount of resistance, in many places, ending, indeed, in bloodshed; for though the unmarried priests, of whom there were a great many, very generally adopted the papal views, the married ones at once addressed letters of protest to all the bishops of England, France, Germany, Spain, &c., denouncing the pope as a heretic, "for endeavouring to enforce a dogma totally at variance with all the previous canons of the church and the teaching of the New Testament." That was the state of feeling throughout great part of Europe; and if the priests were indignant, we may well imagine their wives were more so, and not a little aided in inflaming the honest indignation of their husbands at so barbarous an ukase. Even the bishops and archbishops were seriously divided in opinion on its expediency. Bishop Otho of Constance never published the decree at all in his diocese, but gave his clergy the most full and complete permission to marry: the bishop of Magdeberg, "on moral grounds" (his grace thought priests were no angels, and might be like rather to renounce their cassocks than their wives,) set himself in positive opposition to it; and the synod of Paris, in 1704, denounced the proceedings of the pope as heretical. Many prelates, indeed, a large majority of the

body, proved much more tractable, and not only gave full publicity to the decree, but used all their authority to enforce its fulfilment. With but few exceptions they were unmarried men, for Hildebrand had taken good heed since the pontificate of Leo IX. that no other obtained episcopal ordination; they, therefore, had nothing to lose by celibacy. Yet a great many, notwithstanding their best endeavours, were quite unable to carry out at once the will of their master, in many instances their clergy breaking out into open revolt at the attempt. When Siegfried, archbishop of Mayence, and a devoted partisan of Gregory, summoned his clergy to inform them "within six months they must, without exception, either give up their wives or their priestly office," they expressed their opinion of the measure in such threatening sort that, for very terror of his life, Siegfried swore by all the saints he would renounce every thought of carrying it out. The same results ensued in the bishopric of Passau, and in that of Cambray, the insulted women rose in actual rebellion, and carried their indignation so far that an over-zealous monk who had dared defend the new doctrines of celibacy, was summarily burnt to death by them on an improvised bonfire.

Gregory heeded little these occasional excesses, for there were three classes of men on whom he could rely, and by whose aid he felt sure of victory sooner or later. The first of these was constituted as we have already indicated by the bishops; the second by the monks; the third formed the mass of the lower classes. The better to gain over the latter, legates and friars were sent into every country to preach that neither the

mass nor the sacraments could have their full efficacy if administered by a wedded priest, and to incite the people against those of their pastors who refused to put away their helpmates. The mob soon took the matter in hand, and rushing down with fanatical madness on the dwellings of the offenders, drove their wives and children out of doors, made treasure trove of whatever they could lay their hands on, and did not hesitate at murder itself in carrying out the fiat of His Holiness. The most heartrending scenes that can well be imagined were of constant recurrence; thousands of abandoned, or rather forcibly divorced, wives, thousands of poor children branded with bastardy wandered about without shelter wherever the will of Rome commanded obedience, whilst as many priests lost their lives in defending those nearest and dearest to them. All this mattered nothing to the great Hildebrand; he had conquered, celibacy was established, and the clergy, emancipated alike from state and family duties and interests, fell at once and completely into the hands of His Holiness.*

* It must not, however, be supposed that the struggles of the priesthood against celibacy were overcome at one stroke, they lasted during full two hundred years; down to the thirteenth century there were still married priests in northern Europe, in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, &c., and in Iceland the new dogma was never carried out into practice; but still these formed but a succession of single-handed combats, as it were, of no ultimate importance in the contest. A far more interesting subject for historical investigation would be offered by the study of the moral consequences of this compulsory celibacy, and though we will not here enter into any of the scandalous details connected with the system, we may yet assert, that the subsequent complete demoralisation of the Catholic priesthood resulted more than from any other cause from this

To make the church completely independent of the state (and only by its complete independence could the authority of Rome over the priesthood be firmly se-

favourite scheme of Pope Gregory: they thenceforth could not marry, but found effectual consolation in the new species of "housekeepers" who soon arose to supply all the clerical requirements, so that Photius, patriarch of Constantinople, declared, "In the western churches there is a vast multitude of children, but one knows not who the fathers are." Bishop Pelagius da Silva, who lived in 1320, says, in Spain and Portugal the children of the laity scarcely exceeded in number those of the priests." It was frequently proposed to lay a tax upon clerical concubinage, and housekeepers under forty years of age were strictly forbidden; priests found compensation for this harshness in the matrons and maidens of their flocks, or shared the manse with some fair cousin, or even nearer relative. Scandals of this latter character increased so rapidly, that many priests were tried and punished for incest. The evil became so flagrant that John XXII., at the beginning of the fourteenth century, legalised priests' mistresses, of course in consideration of a special tax; but the trouble and scandal only grew the greater, for those priests who did not avail themselves of the privilege granted, were assessed as heavily as their weaker brethren, and were not a little incensed at so monstrous an injustice. The most serious evil of the whole scheme was the contempt into which the vices it developed gradually brought the priesthood. We need but refer, as an illustration of this, to the contretemps which befel the cardinal legate sent to France by Pope Honorius, in 1125, to take measures against the licentiousness of the clergy. The legate fulfilled his mission with apostolic zeal, and to the edification of all good Christians; then a banquet was given in his honour at Lyons, and when his eminence left the festive board, the other guests, more merry than discreet, resolved to bid him good-night once more, crept quietly up to his chamber, opened the door with unseemly haste, and beheld the holy man in bed—but with other companionship than his own pious thoughts—"nudatus usque ad unguem," very needlessly adds the chronicler, who proceeds to say the company sent down for some wine, and merrily drank a "pleasant night's rest" to Cardinal John and that fayre ladye whose head shared his pillow. Such stories were soon bruited abroad among the people, and pasquinades and satirical songs on the priesthood and its self-denial were circulated from mouth to mouth. In every house might be heard such kind of poetical appreciation of clerical chastity as

cured), there still remained another step to be taken, royal and national influences in clerical nominations had to be supplanted. In effecting this, Gregory's boldness and tact has scarcely been equalled in political history; firstly, in the matter of papal elections by the establishment of the College of Cardinals, and again in the Statute of Investiture with regard to all bishops and archbishops. Both these measures, however, involved the papacy in such fierce disputes with the temporal powers that we must take a hasty glance back at political history to properly understand their full bearing.

The manner in which the popes had usually been appointed we have already seen, and Emperor Henry III. had taken the elections completely into his own hands when he placed Clement II. on the papal chair deposing the three rival Italians who dishonoured it, and nominated the six succeeding popes, all of whom were Germans. Such a state of things was necessarily highly

"Jesuiten sind stets ihrer zwei
Sind aber ihrer drei
So ist ein Weibstuck dabei."

Roughly translated—

"Jesuits abrace go commonly,
If so hap that there are three,
I trow the third will be a she."

The writings of Boccaccio, and many others of the same stamp, were read with inconceivable avidity, though they lashed the vices of the priests without compunction, and not much more delicacy. The Reformation was in great part brought on by "Celibacy;" and in Catholic countries public opinion has not much more respect now than of old for clerical housekeepers. Witness the popular song:—

"Mädle wenn du diene muss,
Diene nur bei Pfaffen
Hannst den Lohn * * *
Brauchts nicht viel zu schaffen."

distasteful to Hildebrand, in the first place, because Germans were elected,—in the second, because the emperor, *i. e.*, "the temporal power" elected them, and from the influence of the latter he had resolved to emancipate the church. Hildebrand set himself this task from the commencement of his career, but he was far too wise to let his purpose be perceived, and knowing well the stout kaiser would never willingly suffer any infringement of his prerogatives, resolved to advance by very cautious and slow degrees towards the object he had so much at heart. He, as a preliminary step, induced Leo IX., who trusted his subtle subdeacon more than was perfectly wise, to allow himself to be re-elected on arriving at Rome by the people, nobility, and clergy of the city, assuring His Holiness it was but a mere form, but would completely secure his popularity there. He, in like manner, persuaded the next pope, Victor II., who, like Leo, was appointed by the emperor to go through the same ceremony. The worthy Suabian (Victor was a son of Count Hartwig of Calw) little dreamed that Hildebrand had assured the Romans the nomination of the pope by the emperor was only to be regarded as a "suggestion," the subsequent ratification by the people and clergy of Rome alone legalising the election. He pursued the same course with the next pontiff, Stephen X., and not until the death of the third of kaiser Henry's nominees, in 1058, did he venture to bring his whole plan to light. Henry III. had died in the meantime, and his crown had passed to his son Henry IV., who was still a minor, under the regency of Agnes, the empress mother. The cardinal legate

(Hildebrand now held that office at the imperial court) felt the moment for decisive action had arrived; he assumed the appearance of the most complete devotion to the interests of the empress, applied himself, apparently, to the maintenance of the imperial prerogatives, in opposition to the election of a certain Benedict X., who, by heavy bribes, secured the suffrages of many of the Romans. A serious schism then broke out in Rome; the higher clergy, who had promised Hildebrand to appoint no one without his consent, refused to recognise Benedict X., and the Cardinal Legate finally persuaded Agnes to name as pope a certain bishop Gerardus of Florence, a Burgundian by birth, but completely devoted to Hildebrand's interests. The empress consented, and Gerardus, accompanied by Hildebrand as his faithful adviser, proceeded to Rome, and mounted the apostolic throne as Nicholas II., Benedict X. resigning his purchase without opposition. A synod was immediately summoned, under the presidence of Cardinal Hildebrand, to consider how future papal election might best be conducted without prejudice from party influence; and it was finally resolved. "The right of electing the pope shall from henceforth remain in the keeping of the higher clergy of Rome, namely, cardinal bishops, cardinal presbyters (or priests), and cardinal deacons." It was also resolved the pope so appointed should be immediately presented to the assembled people, patricians and priesthood of Rome, and the intelligence of the choice arrived at immediately forwarded to the emperor, not in order to its ratification by him, but to engage his protection for the new pope.

In these resolves lay a complete revolution of all the earlier procedure. The influence of the citizens on the papal elections, if this scheme was carried out, would be effectually eliminated, and the imperial right of presentation changed for an apparent suzerainty, though really into an engagement of protection, ["Advocatia" was the term employed] to the apostolic throne. The announcement that the election of the pope lay for the future with the "College of Cardinals," was, in so many words, a declaration; it was wholly independent of all Temporal patronage, and consequently of the German kaisers; the question remained, was Hildebrand able to carry out this bold design? But the reader may ask, who, then, are these cardinals who constitute the "college?" and we should answer the question before proceeding further with our story. Cardo signifies an axis, hinge, or chief turning point; therefore, *cardinalis* would indicate something of supreme worth, or import; we need but recall its application to the highest moral qualities, thence known as cardinal virtues, and thus it was very customary in the Roman empire, under the Cæsars, to entitle the chief imperial dignitaries and officials "cardinalis." The appellation took the liking of the Christian bishops, and, on becoming rich and powerful, they also assumed the right to be called "Cardinales." In fact, the name was very frequently accorded them, as the bishop of Ravenna and several of the French clergy in the tenth century were so distinguished; but still more persistently was the distinction sought by the chief ecclesiastics at the court of the patriarchs, or popes, at Rome, and by the prelates whose

sees laid in its immediate vicinity, as those of Ostia, Porto, Sabina, Palestrina, Frascati, Albano, &c., &c., and by the higher clergy whose benefices were within the city. No one ever thought of contesting the title any more than that of "Papa" assumed by the Roman patriarch. There were, therefore, cardinal bishops, cardinal presbyters, cardinal legates, ready to Hildebrand's hand, and this new institution he introduced was but their incorporation into a "College" (collegium), having the prerogative of nominating the pope. Our readers, doubtless, know well the meaning of a cathedral chapter, "Domus Collegium." It implies nothing more than the chapter college, or brotherhood of the deans resident in the house (domus) of the bishop, thus becoming his advisers and assistants, his consistorial counsellors — so to say. In like manner the College of Cardinals formed the papal consistorial court, and resembled, as nearly as might be, the Holy Sanhedrim of the Jews.*

* The number of the cardinals originally varied between seven and fifty-three, until Sixtus V., in 1556, finally fixed it at seventy, the number of Christ's disciples; of these there were seven bishops, forty presbyters, twenty deacons. By the edict passed in the Lateran Council, in 1179, two-thirds of the votes recorded were necessary to constitute a valid election; but this regulation was perfectly disregarded. Little by little the privileges of the cardinals increased. Innocent IV. (1243-54) gave them a scarlet hat and precedence over all other bishops; Boniface VIII. (1294-1303) the scarlet cloak; Paul II. (1464-71) the white canopy lined with red, and ornamented with gold cords; Urban VIII. (1631) the title of "Eminence." They took precedence of electors, royal princes, and dukes, and immediately followed royalty. They were authorised to kiss queens and princesses, in ceremonial greeting, on the lips; and if one of the seventy passed a malefactor in the streets, the penalty the latter should have suffered was at once rescinded. No cardinal

It must of course be understood, the "Collegium," founded by Hildebrand, was not originally what it subsequently became, though the latter developments were but in completion of his plan. The Sanhedrim had been the prototype in his mind, and the later additions were comparatively of little moment. The question immediately to be considered was, what the world, still more, what the emperor of Germany would say, to this change. For the moment there was nothing to be feared, or as long as the devout Agnes held the sceptre,—but afterwards?

Hildebrand would have to oppose force with force, and foreseeing the coming difficulties, sought alliances with the neighbouring powers. With the duke of Florence, father of the famous Mathilda of whom we have already spoken, he easily attained his end; with Robert Guiscard, of Normandy, he had more trouble: the latter but a few years previously had descended on Italy, making himself master of the south of the peninsula, with Calabria and Apulia, and had nearly turned his arms against the very patrimonium of St. Peter. Fortunately, the "true faith" was strong in the hearts of duke Robert and his Normans; and when Nicholas II., at

bishop could be held guilty of any offence unless seventy-two witnesses could be produced to prove it; against a cardinal deacon only twenty-seven were demanded. The smallest revenue received by any of the number could not have been under 4,000 scudi; the majority enjoyed five or six times this amount, though, generally speaking, they had paid dearly enough for their honours. The fees on receiving the ring worn on the fourth finger reached 500 ducats; the scarlet hat, in many of the pontificates, could not be obtained for less than 40,000 scudi; and frequently, when the treasury fell short at Rome, no better financial expedient could be found than to make a batch of cardinals.

the instigation of Hildebrand, threatened excommunication, he at once proved submissive. Then Cardinal Hildebrand suggested the conquest of Sicily, which was then contested by Greeks and Saracens, to the famous old king, as a much more profitable undertaking, and promised him the papal sanction to his acquisitions in south Italy if he consented to receive them as a feoff of Rome. The proposition of the pope included recognition of Robert as a legitimate prince, and the latter did not long hesitate, gratefully declaring himself ready to conclude the compact, and promised a yearly tribute of twelve denarii for every pair of oxen in his new dominions. The Holy Father appointed him Gonfaloniere of the holy church, and formally sanctioned his pretensions to Calabria, Apulia, and the still unconquered island of Sicily.* Thus were two allies secured; and Hildebrand could more calmly wait the gathering storm. In the meantime Nicholas II. died, and the college of cardinals, for the first time, proceeded to put its newly-contrived rights in force, electing Alexander II., a Milanese, and the mere tool of the great cardinal,† without in any way applying for the consent of the empress, Agnes. This was too great a trial even for so pious a lady's endurance. She convened a synod at Bâle, and the election

* The papacy has ever since claimed suzerainty over Sicily, and the right to dispose of its crown.

† Hildebrand used contemptuously to call his new pope "Asinandrello" (my little donkey); and even applied his palm to the apostolic ears in very irreverent wise, according to the testimony of Cardinal Benno. Hildebrand, under such circumstances, was naturally pretty well master of the papal revenues, and could easily smooth the way for his own future election.

of Alexander II. declared null and void by it, setting up the bishop of Parma under the name of Honorius II. as a rival pope. A small body of troops was despatched by her orders to secure his triumphal entrance into Rome; but the imperialist soldiers were soon routed by those sent against them by Hildebrand; and Honorius II. was glad to renounce all designs on St. Peter's throne and get back to his episcopal see at Parma: this occurred in 1061. But Hildebrand justly supposed the empress mother would not be inclined to sit down quietly under the defeat, and so resolved to find other occupation for her Germans; and forthwith carried out a plan more creditable to his ingenuity than to his honour, persuading Hanno, archbishop of Cologne, a devoted servant of Rome, to seize the person of the young emperor and deprive the empress of the authority she wielded in his name.

Hanno at once fell in with the plot, attached himself to a party of the nobles already disaffected, enticed young Henry into a vessel on the Rhine one day, and quietly sailed off with him to Cologne. The bishop secured the reins of government in possessing himself of the person of the sovereign; and though many of the great lords remained faithful to Agnes and fiercely contested this usurpation, so that the empire for years was torn by civil strife, and all Germany likely to dissolve into chaos, the archbishop weathered the tempest, and educated his pupil in such true priestly fashion, that all the better and generous promise of the boy's youth was effectually obliterated. Such were the consequences of Hildebrand's council to his grace of Cologne. But the head of the

church heeded such things but little: the greater the demoralisation of Germany the greater the advantage of Rome, for it brought the opportunity of papal independence; and indeed this was actually attained when Hanno, as regent, recognised Alexander II., the nominee of Hildebrand, as duly elected "Papa Universalis;" when the latter, at a synod held at Mantua, had deposed Honorius. This was Hildebrand's first victory over the temporal power; and, sufficiently satisfied of the utterly distracted state of the empire of Germany, he felt that now the right moment had arrived to put his own hand to the helm. It was therefore necessary Alexander should withdraw from the scene. He died, in fact, with singular appositeness, in February, 1073, and the tiara was once more in the gift of the Sacred College. Hildebrand knew full well his brother cardinals regarded him as a two-edged sword, and were probably quite capable, if the matter were left completely in their hands, of choosing some one of more tranquil character; he therefore employed his agents to such good effect in bribing the people of Rome, that when the remains of Alexander were carried with all befitting pomp and reverence to sepulture, the crowd cried as with one voice, "Hildebrand is pope, we will have no one but Hildebrand." All the citizens were gathered in the streets; and presently some of the well-taught enthusiasts, seizing the mighty cardinal with respectful violence, bore him aloft on their shoulders to St. Peter's and the chair of the apostle, crying, "The blessed St. Peter hath appointed him;" and then proceed to sing "Te deum laudamus," in which the whole assembly joined. Thus Hildebrand

was made pope without any interposition of the college he had appointed, or any authority, beyond the mob and his own broad pieces.

In the meantime Henry IV. had long attained his majority, and so succeeded to the supreme crown of Germany. Hildebrand had some time since solemnly promised him, during a mission to Germany, he would neither accept the papal crown nor support the candidature of any other person, without the royal consent previously bestowed. As there was some cause to apprehend Henry might march down on Rome to revenge the perjury, Hildebrand dispatched courier after courier, in hot haste, with the most humble missives, entreating pardon for the forcible nature of his election, and begging its ratification from the king and future emperor. The wiser of the young monarch's councillors,* and there were even some bishops among the number, warned him in the most urgent manner against this wolf in sheep's clothing. Others, again, warmly espoused the cause of Hildebrand; whilst his own letters, conceived with the most touching humility, had no little effect on the mind of a youth as vain as he was impressible. In short, the final result was, that the new papal election was fully recognised, and Gregory VII. placed the triple crown formally upon his brow; yet scarcely had the first act of the ecclesiastical comedy

* Hildebrand declared, among other things, "he had merely accepted the election in a provisional sense, without prejudice to the respect and reverence due to our beloved son, the future emperor—(Salvo debito honore et reverentia dilecti filii nostri Henrici imperatoris futuri),"—and entreated his majesty to give the preference to some other, did he know any more worthy or more faithful.

closed, when Henry learned what manner of gratitude his complacence had won for him.

The first achievement of Gregory's pontificate was the establishment of the dogma of celibacy, the introduction of which had already been made good; the second was the systematised subjection of the temporal sovereigns, all of whom he contemplated bringing into vassalage to Rome, as he had already done with Robert, duke of the Normans. He sent letters to all the crowned heads of Europe, the king of Germany alone excepted, demanding boldly they should recognise his suzerainty alone, pay tribute to Rome in acknowledgment of their own vassalage, or on their refusal he must have recourse to other measures. Briefs to this effect were sent to Arragon, Castille, Leon, Navarre, France, England, Denmark, Norway, Poland, Hungary, Dalmatia, &c., &c.; in each case founding his claims on "long established precedent," though no such precedent ever had existed.

From several he received a positive refusal; among these were France, Leon, Castille, and Navarre; others, including England, Norway, Denmark, and Arragon, compromised, by consenting to an annual present—the Peter's pence, of which we have already spoken at some length, though they totally refused any recognition of vassalage, or tribute that should represent it. Gregory contented himself as best he might, for he did not care to risk anything against opponents whom he felt were as determined as himself. The case was very different with Poland, Hungary, and Dalmatia; the last was governed by a duke, very eager to exchange his title for

a royal one; what course was then plainer for him than that, in imitation of Stephen of Hungary, he should apply to Rome for the coveted dignity; and Gregory would only consent on promise of his oath of vassalage.

A King Solomon ruled in Hungary, who, to acquire a powerful alliance against his cousin and rival, Geysa, had consented to hold his crown in feoff from the German emperor; but Gregory, who maintained that Hungary, through the coronation of King Stephen in 999, was a feoff of the Holy See, adopted the cause of the pretender Geysa, who, of course, had previously agreed to acknowledge the suzerainty of the pope. Gregory fulminated ban and anathema, and expended his treasure so liberally in the contest, that Solomon was effectually overcome. The same fate awaited King Boseslaf of Poland, or Cracow rather, for he had divided the kingdom with his two brothers, and only possessed the latter province; Boseslaf refusing to pay the Peter's pence imposed by Rome, and, moreover, having the misfortune to kill the Bishop Stanislas of Cracow in a brawl, Gregory excommunicated him, laid his land under interdict, and rested not until the sovereign had become a discrowned fugitive. So acted Hildebrand towards the pettier princes with whom he could measure his power without too much danger; but he soon ventured to challenge the mightiest potentate in Europe, the emperor king of Germany, in the proud hope that were he but once subdued, the sovereignty of the world must lapse into the hands of him who ruled in Rome.

Hildebrand, in pursuance of his designs for universal monarchy, had resolved, as we have already seen, to

raise the church completely above state interference; above all things making the priesthood independent of the temporal power. With the lower clergy he gained this end through the institution of celibacy, which cut them off from all family and social sympathies; with the bishops of Rome by the establishment of the Sacred College (securing the papal elections without participation of the emperor); and finally, with the higher dignitaries generally, by the statutes of investiture, which accomplished their complete liberation from the national and princely influences they had previously been compelled to acknowledge.

The various episcopal sees throughout Europe had so much increased in size, and wealth, and population, that they might justly be regarded as actual principalities. These were subject, like all papal territories in the middle ages, to the action of the feudal laws; their holders were bound to furnish the state with a certain number of men at arms during war, &c., &c.; and no bishop or archbishop could take possession of the lands annexed to his see, without having been formally enfeoffed in them by the head of the state. Episcopal ordination was, of course, a ceremony of purely ecclesiastical character; but ordination did not enfeoff the receiver with the landed endowments of his diocese, which could alone be given by the lord suzerain—in Germany this was the emperor. Enfeoffment in the case of church dignitaries was entitled investiture.

For many centuries, indeed, this investiture of all abbots, bishops, and archbishops, had been performed by their respective sovereigns, and no word of protest raised

against the custom. Kings, priests, and popes, alike agreed on the matter, and the candidate to a bishopric never received his episcopal ordination before the king had bestowed the ring and crosier of investiture. Symbolical ceremonies were usual at all enfeoffments; the ring signified a marriage with the church, and the crosier the spiritual charge of her shepherd. It was but the simplest necessity that those who enjoyed the land should accept the duties appertaining to it. We must acknowledge the temporal power thus gained immense influence in episcopal nominations, and that bishops holding their lands during the goodwill of the monarch, often exhibited much more zeal in his interests than for those of the church, or, we should rather say, of the pope. All this would be changed if Gregory succeeded, and the bishops in future have no other but those of the Romish see.

Gregory's task might have been accomplished with no great difficulty, had its purpose been merely a religious one; he would simply have given back the royal and imperial feoffs of the church to their respective quarters —but, heaven save the mark! he found it far more profitable to wrest the ancient rights of investiture from the hands of those who had rightfully possessed it; choosing to ignore the fourth commandment rather than sacrifice any tittle of church revenue, or church property.

The decree in reference to this matter was promulgated in 1075; its chief points were, "that every layman, without any exception, should be thenceforth prohibited, under penalty of excommunication, from bestowing in-

vestiture on any priest; whilst priests were forbidden, under 'pain of deprivation,' to accept any investiture of an archbishoprick, bishoprick, or abbey, from the hand of a layman." Bishops were to be elected by cathedral chapters, archbishops by the bishops, though the ratification of the choice so made remained absolutely with the pope; and this ratification included full authorisation to the possession of all lands appertaining to the abbey, or episcopal or archiepiscopal see concerned. By this act, abbots, bishops, and archbishops, at once ceased to be vassals and subjects of their natural sovereign, to become vassals and subjects of the pope, and the lands of the state were made into feoffs of bishop of Rome.

Such was the main purport of this edict of confiscation, published by Gregory's legates throughout England, France, Germany, and Spain, accompanied by emphatic adjurations to obey its commands with undeviating exactitude. The expropriation was justified by the simple declaration, the measure was needed for the service of the church, His Holiness finding it the only one capable of suppressing the scandal and simony so prevalent. The pope, therefore, assumed the right to act against all right, in order to make iniquity profitable.

It must here be conceded that the abuses against which Gregory declaimed were very flagrant, especially so in Germany, where Kaiser Henry III., for example, had made a practice of replenishing his coffers, when very low, by episcopal appointments, which, if not actually sold, were repaid by curiously liberal presents

from the receiver. Moreover, he was in the habit of bestowing a rich diocese, by way of sinecure, with little reference to the spiritual qualifications of the favourite so honoured.

Things were still worse under his son, Henry IV., who, having been declared of age at fourteen, led a wild enough life with his friend and favourite, Count Werner. When either of the two had no more money to dice away, they staked some ecclesiastical benefice, or paid their debts by pawning one. Great abuses enough there were, and it was the evident duty of the pope to remove them; but he resolved to do so, not by appealing to law and good morality, which regarded simony as deeply flagitious; not so, indeed; he had a far more advantageous panacea; he would deprive the temporal powers of their simoniacal trafficking, but transfer it to the head of the church, as a robber might, on moral grounds, seize the strong box of a miser, to put an end to his usury. At the same time that Gregory mulcted the kings of their claims to episcopal investiture, he established the regulations respecting the archiepiscopal pallium, of which we have already spoken. He, the pope, had resolved to reign sole autocrat in church and state, and no man should prevail against him.

In every kingdom into which Gregory dispatched his manifestoes, no notice whatever was accorded them; the sovereigns continued to "invest" their abbots, bishops, and archbishops, as before; and, doubtless, King Henry IV. of Germany would have done the same, but the reckless licentiousness of his early life, and his unjustifiable conduct towards Bavaria and Saxony, had bitterly

incensed many of the princes of the empire, especially the archbishops among them, against him, and they only waited some plausible excuse to accomplish his overthrow. It was on this that Gregory founded his hopes, when he challenged the German monarch to this game of investiture; his calculations were well made, as we shall presently see.

He at once opened the contest by pronouncing the deposition of four German prelates, for having bought their sees, and excommunicated five imperial counsellors for being concerned in the sale. It was now to be seen whether Henry IV. would accept the gage of battle thrown down; and secondly, whether doing so, the people were ready to stand by him. Henry raised the gauntlet, and took the deposed and excommunicated simonists under his protection, not a little enraged at the arrogant assumptions of Gregory; but the Germans, his vassals, were unhappily anything but united. Many of the very numerous malcontents among the princes, were delighted at such an opportunity to indulge their jealous rancour against the kaiser, and furnished the pope with various fresh charges to be brought against their ill-starred suzerain, and encouraged him to proceed with his great task. Gregory saw at once the game was already in his own hands, and throwing the mask aside, no longer merely demanded the relinquishment of the investiture with ring and crosier, in his favour, but cited the German king to appear at Rome in the beginning of the year 1076, answer before a synod for his evil life, and meet the various special charges to be then heard against him. The pope thus summoned

his own feudal lord as a culprit before the papal judgment seat, constituting himself an authority over the head of the great German empire.

Such unexampled pretensions so exasperated King Henry, he drove away the legates who had brought the message with the greatest contumely, issued a manifesto stating the whole question at issue, and called on the bishops and archbishops of his empire to meet in synod at Worms, on the 24th July, 1076,* "and take into consideration the fitting means by which the church might be delivered from the tyranny of a man, who would fain constitute himself sole arbiter of the whole world." The synod was very numerously attended, and Archbishop Engelbert of Trêves, Bishop Theodoric of Verdun, and Cardinal Benno (a personal foe of Gregory), painted such a revolting picture of the policy and acts of the pope, that the latter was unanimously deposed as a "simonist, adulterer, murderer, atheist, and sorceror," in fact, every imaginable crime was laid to his charge. This was assuredly the best reply to the papal demands: but Gregory had his weapons ready, and immediately fulminated the anathema against Henry, absolved his subjects, in the name of St. Paul, from their oath of allegiance, and declared the crown of Germany vacant;† the excommunication of a sovereign also involving his deposition.

Thus was deposition against deposition, declaration of

* Three years later, 1079, the papal authority was definitely established in England.

† It was Pope Celestine III. who kicked the crown from the Emperor Henry VI's head, to illustrate his power to make and unmake kings.—*Translator.*

war against declaration of war; on one side the rallying cry was:—"Sacerdocium," or the Holy Church; on the other, Imperium—the Divine right of kings. There could be little doubt who would remain master of the field, if but the deadly terror of the ban could be overcome. But the pope's light infantry—the monks, black, white, and brown—spread themselves over the land, and whispered in every ear, that whoso gave aid to, or held communion with an excommunicate, must prepare for everlasting damnation; papal legates preached in every city, that he who supported the cause of the emperor, must share his perdition here and hereafter, and at once suffer confiscation of all worldly possessions. The popular terror and excitement increased with every day; so completely were men's minds paralysed by the blow, that no one bethought himself if the pope were justified in thus pronouncing the most terrible of ecclesiastical sentences, when the point at issue concerned temporal interests merely. Henry's own mother, the pious Agnes, who had retired to a convent, was so much troubled in conscience, that she declared against her son, as indeed did his aunt, the Duchess Beatrix. At length the emperor's adherents all melted away, until he could count on none but the bishop of Utrecht, and Count Gottfried, of Lothringen, who both well knew by that time what they had to fear from the ban. The chiefs of the malcontents, Duke Welf of Bavaria, Duke Berthold of Carinthia, and Rudolph of Suabia (Henry's brother in law), seized the opportunity afforded by the general excitement, to summon a meeting of the electors at Tribur, in October,

1076, and Henry was there declared formally deposed, unless, within a year and a day, he succeeded in freeing himself from the excommunication.

Such were the consequences of the papal anathema. The unfortunate sovereign was abandoned by all, and at length his own spirit was so effectually broken, that the kaiser felt there was no other course left than to proceed to Italy, and entreat the pope's forgiveness. In mid winter, accompanied by a few faithful retainers, he crossed the Alps, regardless of the danger that awaited him from the excessive cold, and frequent avalanches, and descended in the beginning of January Mont Cenis, into the plains of Lombardy. Great were the rejoicings of the Lombards at his appearance. They thought he had come to call the pope to a reckoning. Not only the whole laity, but the very bishops were enthusiastic in such a cause, and he might have marched on Rome at the head of a considerable army, could he but have mastered his own spiritual terrors.

The pope was preparing to leave with his much-beloved Mathilda for Augsburg, whither the discontented princes of Germany had invited him, when suddenly came news of Henry's arrival in Milan. Never dreaming he was approaching as a suppliant, Gregory, in mortal fear, sought refuge with his fair friend, in the fortress of Canossa; thus, at least, placing stout stone walls between him, and, as he thought, the so redoubtable foe. But poor Henry came not as an enemy and a conqueror, but as the humblest vassal of holy church; and did but make his way to Canossa, to entreat for pardon in sackcloth and ashes. He found no welcome within the

walls; he was admitted no further than the court-yard; and there he stood in horse-hair shirt, bare-footed and bare-headed, for three long days and nights, from the 25th to the 28th of January, exposed to bitter frost and hunger; until at length the triumphant Gregory, at the entreaty chiefly of Mathilda, consented to forego any longer enjoyment of his antagonist's humiliation, and released him from the ban.*

Gregory still deferred granting complete absolution, but commanded a Reichstag (parliament of the empire) to be summoned; then Henry might clear himself, if possible, from the various charges that had been brought against him. "Only when he (Henry) had thus made his peace, and had further promised to be faithful and obedient to the pope should he recover crown and sceptre."

Since the world began no monarch had ever suffered himself to be so insulted by priestly arrogance as Kaiser Heinrich by Pope Gregorius, and the outspoken Lombards did not hesitate to say so to the royal face when

* The whole of this revolting scene at Canossa is described in a still extant letter of Gregory's, translated literally from the Latin, it proceeds:—"For three days did he (Henry IV.) stand over against the gates of the castle, deprived of every sign of royalty, forlorn, barefooted, in garments of serge, and awhile the tears ran down his face unceasingly; so cried he without intermission for the Apostolic pardon, to yield him some comfort and pity, so that all who beheld him, or had news of his plight, grew so pitiful for him, that they with tears entreated his pardon, yea, many declared, 'they could compass not the hardness of our resolve, and even openly marvelled, saying, we witness not to the dignity of the apostolic chair, but rather to its truly tyrannical cruelty.'" Among the intercessors to whom the pope at length yielded was, besides his beloved countess, a certain German Bishop Kuno of Urach, who could no longer bear to see the humiliation of the German emperor.

Henry returned. Then first dawned upon him an actual presentiment of the despicable part he had played, and, full of honest indignation and self-reproach, he gathered up his ancient courage, and promised the Lombard parliament to be amply revenged for the shame. The stout Lombards loudly cheered his resolve, and a second time he might have headed a Lombard host, but in the meantime serious troubles had broken out in Germany. At a Fürstentag (Council of the Princes) held on the 15th of March, 1077, at Forcheim, by the instigation of Gregory, Duke Rudolph of Suabia was chosen emperor in place of the absent Henry, having, of course, previously agreed to abandon the prerogative of "investiture." Henry was therefore obliged to make all speed back to Germany, but he did not return empty handed, the Lombards granted him considerable aid both in men and money, whilst throughout the empire, especially in the larger cities, so much indignation was excited at the assumptions of Gregory, that the emperor received support from all quarters, even a majority of the bishops declaring in his favour; the pope was growing too powerful even for them, and at a Fürstentag, held at Ulm, Rudolph of Suabia, Welf of Bavaria, and Berthold of Carinthia, were pronounced guilty of high treason. A struggle now arose, which was fated to continue even after Henry's death, and which plunged all Germany into the deepest misery and anarchy. Thrice Henry was vanquished, thanks to the military skill of Otto of Nordheim, and the pope hoped at last that he was crushed for ever. Once more the thunders of the anathema were hurled at his devoted

head, and Gregory sent a crown to Rudolph the rival kaiser, bearing the motto, "Petra dedit Petro, Petrus diadema Rudolpho." "The rock gave to Peter, and Peter gave the crown to Rudolph." Henry was but the more resolute after each defeat, and as Rudolph lost his life in the last battle, Henry at length got the upper hand. He gave no heed now to ban and anathema, but chiefly occupied himself in securing some means of fittingly taking reprisals on the pope.

He summoned a synod at Mayence, and shortly afterwards another at Brixen, and by both Gregory was unanimously deposed, and the archbishop of Ravenna, as Clement II., appointed in his stead. This sentence was notified by the emperor to his terrible opponent with the following exordium: "Henry, by the grace of God, not by usurpation, king, to Hildebrand, pope no longer, but a monk who hath forgotten his duty;" and at once prepared to cross the Alps, bring Gregory to punishment, and set up the newly-appointed pontiff. Gregory was not idle; for the third time he excommunicated his relapsed penitent, and banned the rival pope to the very lowest depths of hell. These amenities were reciprocated by Clement. Then Gregory called on his allies, Robert of Naples and Mathilda of Tuscany, to stand by him with their forces, whilst he busied himself in putting Rome into the best state of defence practicable under the circumstances.

Henry was not to be daunted by these preparations, and crossed the Alps in the spring of 1081, at the head of a fine army. His progress through northern Italy resembled a triumphal procession, and at Whitsuntide

he encamped before the gates of the Eternal City, having routed the troops sent against him by Mathilda, whilst Robert Guiscard declined altogether interfering in the quarrel. The city was, however, so well and bravely defended that he did not enter it until March, 1084, after a three years' siege. Hildebrand shut himself up in St. Angelo, and Henry having installed Clement II. in the Lateran, was crowned emperor by his hands in St. Peter's, with all possible solemnity.

Whilst these events were passing in Italy, the malcontent nobles and princes of Germany had met on the 9th of August, 1081, and elected Count Hermann of Luxemburg, the so-called "garlic king," as emperor, and his cause made such rapid progress that Henry found himself obliged to retrace his march homeward before reducing St. Angelo. Gregory immediately invoked the aid of King Guiscard, who, being assured but a small detachment from the German army had been left in charge of Rome, at once answered the appeal, and soon released the pope from durance; but, at the same time, gratified his own Normans with a full permission to sack the city. The Romans were so incensed that, immediately on their departure, they rose in rebellion, and obliged Gregory to seek safety in flight. This occurred in the autumn of 1084, and the pope found refuge with the Normans, who offered him the city of Salerno as his temporary abode. From thence he excommunicated Henry and his adherents a fourth time, but did not long survive this last discomfiture, dying on the 25th of May, 1085, and before Robert could commence a new campaign against Rome. On his death-

bed Gregory absolved all those whom he had anathematised during his life, except the kaiser and the rival pope Clement II., resolving to take his hatred of both even into the next world.

So ended the career of Gregory VII., sadly fallen from the grandeur and the promise of its commencement. He had seen the most powerful monarch in the world prone at his footstool; he plunged, by the stroke of a pen, a vast country, whose inhabitants were counted by millions, into fierce civil strife, and many hundred thousand men had slaughtered each other at his bidding; but his great aim and object—a papal universal monarchy—was yet left incomplete, and he, like a Napoleon at St. Helena, he, too, died in defeat and exile.

An admirable portrait of the great Hildebrand still exists in St. Severius church at Naples; he is represented holding the crosier in his left, and a scourge in his right hand, with piercing eyes, and red menacing countenance—a true type of sacerdotal arrogance.

IV.—The two Innocents (1198-1254), and the Mendicant Friars.

The war cry, "Sacerdotium" on the one side, and "Imperium" on the other, was not silenced by the death of Hildebrand; indeed, each succeeding pope endeavoured to imitate his policy with more or less success. Of course, we cannot pretend to give a complete history of the papacy, the limits of the present work would be quite unequal to such a study, nor can we follow in detail the tactics inaugurated by the son of the Poano blacksmith. We must be content to record the chief

facts merely, and they will be fully sufficient to prove the peculiar character of the humility professed by the "Servi, servorum," the popes, whose great aim was the establishment of a theocratic autocracy.

The immediate successor of Gregory VII. was the famous Desiderius, abbot of Monte Casino, who took the name of Victor III.; the emperor had set up a rival pontiff called Clement III., and Victor, of course, lost no time in excommunicating both him and his chief patron, but Victor unfortunately died within the year, and thus left no very perceptible trace in the world's history. The cardinals then elected Bishop Otto of Ostra, who called himself Urban II., and administered the patrimonium of St. Peter from 1088 to 1099. He proved a worthy spiritual heir of Hildebrand, thundered the anathema, in 1089, once more against the rival pope, the kaiser, and their adherents, and incited Conrad, Henry IV's son, to rebel against his father; and, by arranging a marriage between the mature Countess Mathilda (see first book) and the young Duke Welf of Bavaria, soon organised a strong party in Germany against the emperor. The struggles between "Sacerdotium" and "Imperium" continued, with no decisive results, however, during the whole pontificate of Urban II., as the pope still managed to hold his own in Italy as the emperor did within the German territories.

The excommunication of the emperor, in 1094, which might seem to have been rather supererogatory, did not content Urban's taste for terrorising. He soon after placed Phillip of France under a like sentence for having divorced his wife, under the plea of too close consan-

guinity, though really that he might marry the pretty Countess Bertrade, of Anjou. King Phillip submitted to the church, rather than expose himself and his country to the fearful penalties of an interdict.

After the death of Urban, Pascal II. (1099-1118) was raised to the vacant throne, and at once prepared to renew the ban against King Phillip, who, on the death of Urban, immediately went back to the fair Bertrade. The king remained excommunicate during four years, that is, so long as any part of the French clergy continued faithful to him; but his people at length gave unmistakable symptoms of serious disaffection, and Phillip was obliged to yield. After solemnly swearing to have no further intercourse with Bertrade, he received absolution; but in the following year Pope Paschalis granted him full permission to marry her, on condition of giving his co-operation against the emperor of Germany, Henry V. Religion was always a mask for the political schemes of the papacy. Urban had persistently treated the emperor Henry with the same contumely as he had exhibited to the king of France;—excommunicated him, after the precedent of the foregoing popes; incited his second son (the eldest, Conrad, had died in the meantime) to rebel; and at length had the supreme satisfaction of learning the old Kaiser was a captive in the hands of the young prince. Henry IV. died of a broken heart soon after, and the pope would not even allow his corpse to be interred;—the Kaiser had expired unabsolved, and for five years he lay in his coffin unburied, at Spires, until apostolic majesty at length took pity on its dead foe, and he found rest in the grave.

Henry V. was now king and emperor, and found no one to contest his title. As he had made it good chiefly through the assistance of the pope, of course he repaid those good offices with promises of future obedience. Pascal therefore hoped to be troubled with no opposition from that quarter, and shortly published an edict, prohibiting the investiture of any of the clergy by lay hands, as Gregory had previously done, but found, greatly to his astonishment, that the new monarch set very definite limits to his gratitude, and was, above all things, resolved to yield no iota of the imperial prerogatives. Henry V., on the death of his father, put himself at the head of thirty thousand men, and marched over the Alps to come to a clearer understanding with the representative of St. Peter. He demanded definite abandonment of all pretensions to the right of investiture assumed by the pope, and all other ancient imperial rights. Paschalis demurred, and positively refused to perform the ceremony of coronation for his disobedient son. Then Henry, without more ado, seized the pope and the whole college of cardinals, and let his German followers plunder the papal palaces in a really scandalous manner.*

In fact, on this occasion, His Holiness and the cardinals were put in chains, like common malefactors. After this rough lesson a treaty was concluded, on the understanding that the right of investiture was to remain with the pope, though the emperor should be empowered to re-

* Italian writers of that age declared "the Germans had no religion at all; and after a few beakers of wine, would not even respect Jesus Christ himself."

tain at will any of the crown feoffs held up to that time by the bishops of his dominions. The emperor thought he had made no bad bargain; and after receiving the insignia of empire from Pascal, returned home with the papal Bull secured in his strong box. Yet, scarcely had he turned his back on Italy, than the pope called a synod at the Lateran, to annul all the engagements just signed and sealed. But, as apostolic majesty possessed a tender conscience, and had taken a solemn oath never to pronounce the ban of the church against the emperor, Pascal employed Archbishop Guido, of Vienne, to do so in his stead, and contrived, by various means, to thoroughly exasperate the princes and prelates of Germany against their sovereign. This happened in 1111, and the plot worked so well, that for five years Henry V. found himself so completely pre-occupied at home that it was impossible for him to take any measures to punish the pope's breach of faith. At length, in 1116, he once more crossed the Alps, and Pascal took flight to Benevento, throwing himself on the protection of the Normans. Two years later he, like Hildebrand, died in exile, first banning to the lowest depths of hell both the Kaiser and the rival pope, Gregory VIII., set up by him.

The papal party in Rome then elected in his place a certain Gelasius II. (1118-19), for Henry V. had been obliged to withdraw again in consequence of the constant troubles in Germany; but the partisans of the Imperium, at whose head stood the celebrated Cenzio Frangipanni, organised an insurrection, rushed into the church, where the cardinals had assembled to invest the

new pontiff with the insignia of his office, seized, and then dragged him by his hair through the streets, finally thrusting him, loaded with chains, into a dungeon. The cardinals, his partisans, received no better treatment. After a long contest, the priestly faction got the upper hand sufficiently, that Gelasius was enabled to make his escape from Rome. He proceeded to France, but died shortly afterwards in a monastery, though not without having anathematised his rival, Pope Gregory, the emperor, and all their adherents in Rome.

The cardinals, who had accompanied Gelasius to France, now nominated, under the influence of Cardinal Kuno von Urach, a personal enemy of the emperor,—the before-mentioned Bishop Guido, of Vienne,—to the papal throne, under the name of Calixtus II. (1119-24), and the newly-anointed pontiff commenced his reign by once more thundering the church ban against the emperor and the rival pope. He then took ship for Apulia, and reaching Rome by the aid of the faithful Normans, besieged Sutri, where Gregory VIII. had taken refuge. He obtained possession of the place and of the person of his rival, whom he had dressed in a freshly-stripped, bloody goat's skin, then mounted on a mangy camel and paraded through the streets of the capital. The fallen pontiff was finally consigned to life-long imprisonment within the walls of a monastery. Having thus made himself master of the patrimonium of St. Peter, Calixtus summoned a synod at Rheims (1120), and again Henry V. was solemnly pronounced excommunicate, and his subjects absolved from their allegiance.*

* Four hundred and twenty-seven bishops attended this synod; each

A mutual condonation was brought about in 1122 between Kaiser and pope, by the so-called Calixtian treaty, by which it was agreed that the bishops of the empire should in future receive the spiritual "symbols of their office," the crosier and ring, from the head of the church, but the sword and sceptre from the emperor, in recognition of the feudal tenure of their crown feoffs. The appointment of bishops, abbots, &c., to remain as of old, with the cathedral chapters and religious foundations, under the superintendence of an imperial official, who had to invest the fortunate candidate with the sword and sceptre; then followed the papal sanction, without which no election was valid. Such was the end of the famous "investiture" contest, the bishops becoming more or less the mere vicars of Rome; for the absolute veto enjoyed by the latter proved an effectual bar to episcopal independence.

On the death of Calixtus II., the rival factions in the Eternal City set up their respective popes, Celestinus and Honorius II. The latter finally overpowered his antagonist, and governed from 1124 to 1130. No event of his pontificate need detain us, except the excommunication of Duke William of Normandy, for marrying against the apostolic views. After the decease of Calixtus, another contested election ensued, the one party choosing an Innocent II., the other Anacletus II. Both popes cursed each other to their heart's content; but Innocent remained master of the field, and further anathematised King Roger, of Sicily, for supporting

held a lighted wax candle, which he cast to the ground and extinguished with his foot, as the last words of the sentence were enunciated.

Anacletus, presently employing the like discipline against the king of France, with whom he was at feud concerning the appointment of an archbishop of Bruges. As the royal offender did not immediately yield, Innocent at once laid his kingdom under an interdict; nor was the ban removed until it had produced the required effect. Sadly offensive to Innocent was the disrespectful conduct of the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Antioch; their patriarchates had been restored after the Crusades, and they now asserted an equal dignity to their brother of Rome, for "Christ's presence had sanctified Jerusalem, whilst St. Peter was the undisputed founder of the church at Antioch." Of course Innocent fulminated a Bull against the presumption of these new rivals; but the trouble they caused could not be completely stilled, until Jerusalem and Antioch had both fallen again to the Mohammedans; but Innocent died in 1143, and therefore could not enjoy the ultimate victory of his see.

After several unimportant pontificates, of which we have nothing to cite, except that during them the people of Rome were several times placed under interdict, came the only Englishman who ever sat on the throne of St. Peter, Hadrian IV. (1154-1159). He was of the lowest extraction; a monk's bastard, indeed, and had been in menial service in France, saith the chronicle; but his former humble estate did not derogate from the traditional arrogance of his holy office. In the commencement of his reign, serious trouble arose with his Roman subjects, who were bent on establishing a republic under Arnold of Brescia, and he was even obliged to take

refuge at Viterbo, immediately after his coronation. From exile he pronounced sentence of interdict on Rome; and though the Romans at first treated his proceedings with contempt, they were soon brought to a more serious appreciation of their position when Easter came, and no priest dared perform mass, or any religious office. They held out, however, and would even have resisted the spiritual fears of the women; but the pope found other means of attaining his ends.

Frederick I., "Barbarossa" of Hohenstaufen, had been elected emperor of Germany in 1152, and proceeded two years after to Italy to obtain the imperial crown from the hands of the pope. Hadrian sent ambassadors from Viterbo to welcome him, and then proceeded in person to the royal camp. But his surprise and indignation was great indeed, to find the sovereign who had ridden forth to meet him, quite omitted to dismount, and lead the apostolic bridle rein; whilst his horror reached its climax when one of his attendant cardinals, when maintaining that the bestowal of the crown by the pope was actually the bestowal of the empire, was answered by his interlocutor, Otto of Wittelsbach, with a sword stroke, that would have infallibly split his eminence's skull, but for Frederick's interposition. The pope, however, sufficiently recovered his equanimity, when on arriving at the royal tent the emperor knelt down, and kissed his foot; he even ventured to demand why his majesty had omitted the customary "homage of holding the stirrup." Frederick thereupon held counsel with the ministers and bishops who accompanied him, and consented to perform it on being assured the Em-

peror Lothair had done so; but when the time came, he incontinently took the left instead of the right hand stirrup; and when Hadrian expostulated, Barbarossa answered laughing:—"Your Holiness must pardon me, I have had no experience as a groom." He willingly enough met the pope's wishes, when entreated to bring the rebellious Roman to submission, and thus enabled their apostolic liege to return to his capital, and perform the imperial coronation. After the ceremony, Frederick returned to Germany, but entered Italy once more, in 1158, the Lombards having risen in revolt. In the meantime Pope Innocent fell into very ill humour, the kaiser's increased influence was sorely inimical to papal policy: the Germans thus found themselves made the constant mark for papal spleen, whilst their great monarch was insultingly reminded, at every opportunity, it was to Rome he was indebted for his crown.*

So a great coldness arose between pope and kaiser; then the former bethought him to secure the help of the King of Sicily, in the meantime fulminating Bull after Bull against Frederick; but when the redoubtable Hohenstaufen had completely reconquered Lombardy, and given Milan to fire and sword, Hadrian felt it might be wiser to moderate his language, or rather to retreat into discreet silence; an idea but too well jus-

* The ostensible reason for the papal anger was that the see of Verdun had been filled by the emperor's sole authority; and His Holiness was still further annoyed, that two knights, who had robbed a bishop of Lund, travelling in Germany, were not summarily decapitated, and their heads sent to Rome.

tified by a letter he received from Barbarossa, of which the following was the exordium :—

"Frederick, Roman emperor, by the grace of God, and ever supreme suzerain, desireth that the pope and the church shall only take concern for those things which Jesus commanded to be taught and practised."

An unsavoury recommendation for the pope to swallow; and he would, doubtless, have replied to it, by excommunicating the giver at the first favourable opportunity; but he died almost immediately afterwards (1159).

It should be mentioned that the English pope made a present of his native country, with Ireland, and all the other adjoining islands, to Henry II., grandson of the "Conqueror," as though the territory was in the actual possession of the holy see; though, in fact, it was still held by Stephen of Blois.

The successor of Hadrian, Cardinal Orlando Bandinelli, who assumed the name of Alexander III., had for nearly twenty years to maintain a constant struggle with the rival popes set up by the emperor. At the last moments of his own election, the contest ran so closely between himself and Cardinal Octavian, he only secured success by forcibly seizing the papal coronation mantle, and throwing it over his own shoulders, wrong side outward, however, so great was his haste. Octavian shortly afterwards drove Alexander from Rome, and mounted St. Peter's Chair as Victor III. Both pontiffs appealed to Frederick, each hoping to win the imperial support; and he summoned an ecclesiastical coun-

cil at Pavia, before which they were respectively cited to appear.

Victor obeyed; but Alexander declared on the authority of Gregory VII., that the pope could not recognise a superior judicial capacity in any council. The council felt insulted, and after brief deliberation declared Alexander's election invalid, and ratified Victor's claims, which then received the imperial sanction; whilst Frederick commanded his subjects, especially the bishops and clergy, to recognise Victor as pope, to the exclusion of any other. Alexander did not acknowledge himself beaten, and solemnly proceeded to pronounce the ban against Victor, and the emperor, of course, absolving the subjects of the latter from their oath of fealty. Victor as inevitably followed this example, and cursed his opponent to all eternity; whilst the whole of Europe was in a little time divided into two great factions, devoted to the rival parties at Rome. Sicily, with the Normans, Spain, France, and England, were on the side of Alexander. The rest of Italy, and the German empire, enlisted under Victor's banner, the Cistercian monks alone excepted. They preached the cause of his antagonist wherever they went, and were consequently banished from the dominions of the Barbarossa, whilst their vast lands and possessions were declared forfeited. As the greater part of Italy was opposed to him, Alexander found it necessary to seek safety in France; and at a synod held at Tours once more, with bell, book, and candle, consigned his opponents, spiritual and temporal, to the hottest fires of hell. Victor, to return like with like, went through the same ghostly ceremony,

but died shortly afterwards in 1164. The schism was not allowed to die with him; the cardinals at Rome named Paschalis III. as the succeeding pope, and the emperor naturally ratified their choice.

Alexander again saw his throne usurped, but notwithstanding ventured back to Italy in the same year, though not before he had received promise of support from the king of Sicily; whilst he had further assured himself Kaiser Frederick had so much on his hands in Germany, he could not undertake a march upon Rome; and, moreover, both the Lombards and the Romans* had declared, they only awaited the return of His Holiness to prove their complete devotion to his cause.

The sovereign of Sicily and South Italy, received him with open arms, and the papal progress to Rome seemed a long drawn triumphal procession. Paschalis III. sought safety in flight. At the same time the northern states of Italy entered into mutual alliance against Germany, and the Milanese commenced rebuilding their city destroyed by Frederick. Thus the whole of the peninsula was up in arms against the Barbarossa, who, accepting the challenge, at once commenced preparations for a new campaign beyond the Alps, which he actually carried out in 1166. Fortune at first favoured his standard; thanks to the courage of his knights† and

* How well he had managed to secure the respect of the Romans, may be gathered from the fact, that they named a new fortress erected by them, Alessandria, in his honour, and in defiance of the emperor.

† A priest especially distinguished himself among the bravest in the imperial army; this was Archbishop Christian of Mayence, who commanded its vanguard. He was a man of extensive learning, and as famous a statesman as a theologian; though, perhaps, still more re-

men at arms. Every obstacle vanished before him; he restored Paschalis to the Vatican; was crowned emperor by his hand; whilst Alexander had been but too glad to escape to Gaeta, disguised as a pilgrim.

But, suddenly, a terrible plague broke out in the emperor's camp, the marsh fever, which carried off two thousand of the nobles, without counting the tens of thousands of the common soldiers who perished, whilst the enemy received daily reinforcements, so that the only course possible without provoking inevitable destruction was for the invaders to retrace their steps homeward as quickly as possible.*

The Lombards, of course, again revolted, and there seemed no possibility the imperialists could maintain their ground in Rome. Paschalis had died, and the cardinals set up a Calixtus III. in his place, who failed not to strengthen his position by every means in his power, but was suddenly surprised by the return of Alexander at the head of a body of Normans, when no course remained but to secure at least personal safety by abandoning Rome to his rival.

For five years Alexander enjoyed uncontested power;

markable for extraordinary physical strength. He slayed with his own hand no less than three hundred of the enemy before Bologna, and in one battle split the skulls of thirty-nine with his baton. The bishops of that time were not shepherds of souls merely; they knew well how to wield the arms of the flesh when occasion offered.

* Several attempts were made to assassinate the emperor; and at Susa, where the enemy surrounded the house in which he passed the night, he only escaped by the generous devotion of one of his captains, who, greatly resembling the kaiser, allowed himself to be taken prisoner and put to death in his stead. Frederick made his way over the Alps disguised as a pilgrim.

but by 1174 Kaiser Barbarossa had so far recovered his reverses that he was enabled to commence a new Italian campaign. Again, victory seemed chained to the imperial chariot wheels, and Alexander, in despair, had almost resolved to depart for Constantinople, since he could hope for no quiet in the west, when a crisis once more occurred in affairs to the advantage of the Italian party.

Henry, surnamed the "Lion," duke of Bavaria and Saxony, gave a too ready ear to the whispers of the papal emissaries, and, to his eternal dishonour, was persuaded, on the very morning of the battle of Lignano (May 29, 1176), to desert his colours, despite all the emperor's passionate remonstrances at a treason which inevitably brought a bloody defeat upon the German arms. The Lombards, with their far superior numbers, were thus able to counteract all the military tactics of Barbarossa. The imperial fleet suffered as serious a discomfiture, almost at the same time, at the hands of the Venetians at Pisano, when Duke Otho, second son of Frederick was taken prisoner. Barbarossa was thus induced to come to an understanding both with the Lombards, the Venetians, and with the pope, by which the title of Alexander III. was formally recognised (the two great rivals first saw each other at Venice in 1177), and Calixtus compelled to resign his claims.* From thenceforth there

* It strangely happened that the deposed pontiff's life and liberty were not only spared, but he was even permitted to remain in Rome, with an ample pension accorded by his triumphant rival. Alexander, indeed, often invited him to partake the pontifical hospitality; and it must have been no uninteresting picture presented by those two who a

was peace between "Imperium" and "Sacerdotum," so long as Frederick and Alexander lived.

Alexander, though now left undisturbed by the emperor, was not the more disposed to sink into idleness, but at once occupied himself with his projects against King Henry II. of England. Whilst in France he had made acquaintance with Thomas à Becket, the Plantagenet's prime favourite, and contrived completely to secure his adherence to the papal views. The astute Saxon, notwithstanding this, rose even higher in the affection and confidence of his master, and presently found himself created Lord Chancellor. Though his talents commanded respect, his arrogance made him many foes, and some of these presently accused him to the king of malversation of the public revenues. The prime minister was cited before a judicial court to answer the charges, and he appeared, but in his full dignity as the primate of the English church, wearing the sacred robes of his priestly office, bearing a crucifix in his hand. He declared he would submit to no temporal court of judgment, and appeal to the pope; then, leaving the hall, hastened as speedily as possible to France. Scarcely had intelligence of these proceedings reached Alexander, than he at once appointed the fugitive archbishop his legate at the English court; and Becket returned to England with a brief from the pope to King Henry. The king made peace with his old favourite, but Becket had not learnt wisdom or moderation by the

short time since had invoked all the powers of Heaven and Hell in reciprocal cursings, now pleasantly exchanging compliments and jests over their wine cups.

late events, and soon exhibited greater pride and presumption than ever. We all have heard of the royal exclamation, "Will no one rid me of this proud priest?" and the consequent departure of the four knights for Canterbury, where they found the archbishop reading vespers in the cathedral. Then followed the desecration of the sanctuary by the assassination of the proud Saxon. The atrocity of the deed not only excited an universal cry of horror from the priesthood of England, but well nigh from that of the whole world, and the pope was loudly adjured to demand retribution for the murder of his legate; in anticipation of this, Henry at once despatched an embassy to Rome to explain how the affair had originated. The pope long refused to receive the ambassadors, and only relented when they had given their word their master was prepared to submit fully and entirely, to the decision of His Holiness. They then assured Alexander, upon oath, that King Henry was totally innocent of the murder, although a few angry words he had spoken had been misunderstood, but he was ready to fulfil whatever expiation the Holy Father might please to impose. Alexander was satisfied, and shortly despatched two legates to England charged with communicating the papal sentence to the king. It was one little palatable to the royal feelings. Henry had to publicly declare on the Holy Evangelists he had not desired the death of the archbishop, then make a pilgrimage to the martyr's grave, and there kneel to receive from eighty priests, each armed with a three-thonged scourge, the full tale of two hundred and forty lashes on his bare shoulders; finally, enter into a

solemn promise to commence a new crusade, and banish the four guilty knights until, by a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and Rome, they had made their peace with the pope. Under such conditions King Henry was forgiven, and we may be justified in according to Alexander III. the same laurels of victory over the temporal power as those won by Gregory VII. For this it was surely sufficient that the proud Plantagenet had kneeled in the dust, and the great Kaiser Frederick held the apostolic stirrup, even though it were the left one.

To Alexander, succeeded five quite unimportant popes, whose united reigns numbered only sixteen years. One of the number, Lucius III., was the first pope elected by the Sacred College without any interposition of the people, the lower clergy, or the nobility of Rome. Another, Urban III., contrived to distinguish himself by opposing the union of King Heinrich, eldest son of Barbarossa, with the daughter and heiress of the king of Sicily. He had a very appreciable distaste to so dangerous a neighbour close to St. Peter's throne. Frederick I. carried out the plan, notwithstanding; and Urban* is said to have died thereat of vexation. After these five, then succeeded the great Innocent III., who ruled the church from 1198 to 1216, and who, after

* Pope Urban suspended all the bishops who had been present at the ceremony. The bishops kissed the rod and were restored to favour. King Heinrich, meeting one of these shortly afterwards, angrily demanded: "to whom he was indebted for his See, and the broad feoff lands appertaining to it?" "Assuredly to none other than the pope," was the reply. Whereat the king was so angered, a summary application of the stick to the episcopal shoulders was immediately applied, by royal order. The lesson concluded by rolling his Grace in the mud.

Gregory VII., was assuredly the most remarkable man that has ever occupied the apostolic chair. The care of his father, Count Trasimonte da Siena, had given him the best education the age afforded: he had studied at Bologna and Paris; and few popes have been better initiated into the learning of their day than Innocent. With these acquired advantages he united an iron will, and an intellect brilliant as it was subtle, whilst his pride surpassed almost papal arrogance; and his rare ingenuity was chiefly employed to increase the treasures his avarice so loved to hoard. Of this at least we have the proof, that the papal "idea" was developed by him into the realisation of an universal monarchy; and he acknowledged no superior to himself upon earth. The "pope is king of kings and lord of lords," declared Innocent, in one of his addresses, still extant; and from this we may easily conceive what attitude he adopted, both towards the church and the temporal power, when, at the age of thirty-seven, in the full vigour of manhood, he mounted the apostolic throne.

His first achievement was the complete subjugation of Rome and the Romans, and the full establishment of the temporal power of the papacy over the patrimonium of St. Peter. We have already seen how he accomplished this in our "first book," and need not now be detained by further consideration of his German policy. We have seen the profit he extracted from the struggles between the two rival emperors, Otho and Phillip, and to what triumphant effect he employed ban and interdict; we have seen how he succeeded in making Otto IV., Phillip the Suabian, and Frederick II., take the

oath of fealty to him. It is now our business to observe in what manner this Jupiter Tonans acted towards the other sovereigns of Europe, after subjecting the German emperors; how he attained the goal of his ambition, and lived to see all Europe at his feet.

The foundation of the papal supremacy was built, as we have seen, upon the Pseudo-Isidorian decretal. To bring that bold fabrication into active utility, Nicholas II. had employed anathema and interdict; Gregory VII. invented compulsory celibacy; and finally, Innocent III. added to the great edifice of papal power that which was well worthy any thing done by those who had gone before him,—we mean the "Mendicants" and the Inquisition. Monks had existed from very early ages, and then came monastic establishments in manifold variety. Begging friars were, however, a complete novelty among monks; they constituted an institution founded on new rules, and devoted to new objects. They made the vow of "poverty" so inclusive, that they bound themselves to "live wholly by daily alms,—to possess no property whatever;" whilst the vow of "obedience" meant for them complete and unconditional subjection to the will of the pope. They might not inaptly be called the soldiers of the papacy; for every mendicant fraternity, whether Dominican,* Franciscan, Carmelite, Augustin, or Capuchin, represented so many light infantry, under the command of the pope.

* The Dominican and Franciscan were the first begging fraternities established; the former was founded by St. Dominicus Guzman, the latter by St. Francis d'Assisi. Both received authorisation, or rather consecration and organisation, from Innocent III.

The people manifested a great liking for the mendicant orders; the new monks readily attained the arts of vulgar popularity, and were especially successful in ingratiating themselves with women. They accepted no money on their excursions, only offerings in kind,—such as meat, flour, bread, soup. They cultivated good humour and sociality, and often made the peasant forget his hard fare whilst they seasoned the black bread with many a good joke. By such means, and still more by the simplicity of their dress * and mode of life, was their success ensured with the lower classes; whilst they made themselves still further useful by exorcising devils, excommunicating witches, and such like pious labours. So any little shortcomings, in the matter of cleanliness or strict morality, might well be overlooked.†

They soon engrossed nearly every village confessional: they gave much lighter penances to their female penitents than the regular clergy; and their influence, within a short time, surpassed that of all the other members of the priesthood.

Their numbers increased with marvellous rapidity, and

* The costume of a mendicant friar consisted in a serge gown, an under petticoat, a pair of sandals, and a pocket handkerchief,—nothing more. Later, a wooden tobacco box was added, and an ugly peaked cap. Hats or cravats, stockings or hosen,—no such vanities were known by the good brothers, as we may well believe, when they even ignored shirts. (The nuns of the Franciscan and Capuchin Orders are subject to the same rules, and frequently suffer severely, after first professing, from cutaneous affections, produced by the friction of their rough gowns.) —*Translator.*

† A saying, once current in Germany, ran:—"He eats like an Augustin, lies like a Dominican, drinks like a Franciscan, wenches like a Carmelite, and stinks like a Capuchin."

in a few decades they had spread over every kingdom in Christendom.

These monks, dependent as they were upon the pope alone, and recognising no authority but his, became inevitably a very redoubtable weapon in his grasp. One word from Rome could set a million mendicant friars in action to carry out the wishes of His Holiness. His Holiness was minded, perhaps, to carry things with a high hand against some offending sovereign, would excommunicate him, and place his dominions under interdict. The duty of the brown-frocked light infantry was, then, to penetrate the hut of every thral, the house of every burgher, and paint, with many sighs, and in the most appalling colours, all the terrible consequences of the anathema, until the superstition and fears of the people had been so excited, that, though never so attached to their ruler, they, for deadly terror, renounced allegiance to him. This single aspect of their mission may sufficiently convince us of the importance of the mendicant orders to the papacy. We can pass over their various other occupations, their services as university professors, &c.,—for those services were never employed for any other science than that of ministering to papal ambition. We should remember, however, that one of these orders made the extirpation of heresy its chief object, and soon brought religious persecution into an organised system: this was the order of St. Dominic, whose monks might not inaptly be called the papal "Corps of Observation." Under Innocent III. the dogma, that "all who dare think or speak in disaccord with Rome, ought to be exterminated with fire and sword," was

raised into fundamental law; and to this persecution with fire and sword three thousand volunteers devoted their whole energies. They were the slot-hounds of the Vatican; and their services were far more useful to its policy than those of all the other orders united.

The pope's rule over Christendom, by aid of the Inquisition, was far more absolute than any eastern despotism. The limits of the present work quite forbid our entering on any closer details of the life and proceedings of these "mendicants," or the horrors of the Inquisition: we must be content with calling the reader's attention merely to the great additional influence gained by the popes through this last invention, and keep in mind that Innocent III. was the inventor. But, under such circumstances, it is no marvel no power on earth was able to withstand the terrible pontiff.

At that time Alfonso X., who had married a daughter of King Sanctius of Portugal, ruled over Gallicia and Leon. His consort was related to him in some very distant degree; but the bishops of Leon, when applied to by the king for a dispensation, had made no difficulty in according it. The pope, however, had not been consulted, and Innocent, on learning the circumstances, at once ordered Alfonso to put away his wife. Alfonso did not at once comply; then Innocent passed sentence of excommunication on him, and threatened to lay his lands under an interdict unless he proved his repentance by immediate submission. With such a threat held over him, his majesty had no course left but meekly to kiss the rod, and send back the queen to her father, who, incensed at the insult offered to his daughter

broke off all conection with the Roman see. But he paid dearly for his anger; Innocent at once despatched a legate with threats of the church ban unless the rebellious King Sanctius consented to recognise the papal suzerainty, and send the same yearly tribute to Rome which had been promised by his father in gratitude for the royal title. Sanctius was in as miserable a dilemma as his son-in-law; but finally resolved it were better to pay the tribute than encounter all the horrors of ban and interdict, and risk the loss of his crown.

King Philip Augustus of France was less manageable, relying, doubtless, both on his own strength and the good sense of his subjects, but even he found the kingly diadem was doomed to bow to the tiara. Phillip had married the beautiful Agnes de Meran after divorcing the princess Ingeborg, almost immediately after his union with her, because her brother, King Knut of Denmark refused co-operation against the English. Knut applied for redress to Innocent, and Innocent immediately commanded the King of France to put Agnes away, and recall his former consort. Phillip refused, and his kingdom was placed under interdict, whilst the pope next incited the emperor of Germany and several other sovereigns to declare war against him, so that France was at once menaced by discontent within and foreign foes from without.

Pedro of Arragon acted on very different principles to his royal brother Phillip Augustus; voluntarily taking a journey to Rome to receive his crown from the hands of the pope, and formally constituted his kingdom a vassal feoff of St. Peter. Kalo Johannes, who had made

himself lord of Wallachia and Bulgaria, acted with no less servility. An embassy was sent by him to the Vatican, and, doubtless, to gloss over the usurpation, he besought a recognition of his regal title, of course in exchange for his kingdom's vassalage. Innocent accorded the favour, and despatched a special legate into Bulgaria with a crown and all the insignia of royalty, charged, moreover, to anoint and enthrone this king by "papal grace." Innocent employed prerogative with not less boldness in dealing with Poland, Hungary, and Liefland. The kings of both the former countries consented, without opposition, to pay tribute to Rome, and he then summarily declared Liefland a jointure domain of the Holy Virgin, and made it over to the knights of the Sword, of course on the understanding that they should conquer it from the heathen Letts.

Thus governed Innocent III. from the east to the west, from the north to the south of Europe. His power even made itself felt in Constantinople, and he fondly dreamed of extending it into Asia. After the conquest of Constantinople by the crusaders, in 1204, Count Baldwin of Flanders was elected king of Byzantium, and Thomas Maurolenus patriarch of the eastern Latin church. The new patriarch immediately went to Rome to procure ratification of his title from the pope, but Innocent refused recognition of an election originating with laymen; but at length, at the intercession of Baldwin, not only consented to acknowledge the new dignitary but to invest him with the insignia of his office, on the implied condition he should be guided in all things by the will of Rome.

Innocent, in all his dealings that we have yet seen, fully carried out his assumptions as "king of kings, and lord of lords;" but the most notorious exhibition of his arrogance was reserved for England. When the Lord primate died, in 1205, the Augustin monks of Canterbury quietly installed their superior, Reginald, in the vacant see, which was by far the wealthiest in England. Reginald went to Rome to procure the pope's consent to his installation. In the meantime King John grew angry in seeing what he regarded as the richest sinecure in the gift of the crown thus slip from his grasp, and compelled the monks to make a new election, and appoint, at his dictation, John Grey, bishop of Norwich, who was at once invested with all the landed possessions of the primacy. This appointment was also communicated to the pope, but he unhesitatingly denounced it also as uncanonical, and commanded a new election to be effected forthwith, indicating Stephen Langton, of whose sentiments he had satisfactory proof, as the candidate to be chosen. Langton, of course, obtained the see, and received the papal sanction. King John saw clearly through the whole scheme, and knowing what the hypocritical humility of the monks was worth, he was for once justified in his violence when he drove the whole fraternity out of Canterbury, seized their property,—banished Stephen Langton beyond the limits of the English dominions, and wrote a letter of angry remonstrance to the pope for his meddling in the internal affairs of England, to which the appointment of the primate essentially appertained. The pope well knew the craven spirit hiding beneath these high words,

and replied as a monarch to his vassal. John held his ground, and grew more and more incensed; then the pope, driven to extreme measures, thundered forth the ban of the church against him, and the interdict over his whole land. John, maddened with rage, swore by "God's truth," he would banish or imprison every priest who dared obey the interdict, and refuse his proper functions. But Innocent had well studied his plan of action; he knew how little John was liked by his English barons, and, without delay, despatched his legates to proclaim the papal curse from every pulpit in the devoted kingdom. The king caused the legates to be seized, their noses cut off, their eyes put out, and, thus maimed, sent back to their master. He next proceeded to confiscate the lands and goods of all the clergy, whether bishops or abbots, or simple priests, who attempted to carry out the pope's orders, and banished or imprisoned the offenders.*

Notwithstanding the royal menaces, nearly every prelate in the kingdom took side with the pope, and soon throughout the country no church bell pealed, no form of worship was celebrated. Innocent called a council of cardinals at Rome, when all John's vassals were absolved from their allegiance, and the newly-invented begging friars received orders to incite the lower classes to revolt. The friars liked the duty well enough, and soon complete anarchy threatened the whole land; for whilst one party held fast to the king, and would have

* King John was but an ill-conditioned son of the church in his best moods: once, having shot a fine buck, he exclaimed, "What a glorious fat beast; yet he never read a mass forsooth!"

been well pleased to make short work with the whole clergy, another—numerically far stronger—found conscience at issue with loyalty, and refused obedience to the royal officers. This state of things continued for some years, and with each year the schism in the state spread wider, until every county, parish, and family in the kingdom, was alike divided between the predominant factions. King Philip Augustus, like his forbears, had certain very natural longings for the French territories of the English crown, Normandy, Picardy, &c. The pope well knowing this, not only pronounced John's forfeiture of his sovereignty over them, but as formally bestowed it on the king of France, adding, besides, that of England, Ireland, and their dependencies; though, of course, under the condition that Phillip at once made good the gift by his own sword.

Then Phillip collected a large army to carry out the sentence, whilst Innocent preached a crusade against England, and promised plenary absolution to all who took up arms in the cause, whatever their previous misdeeds had been. King John saw the ranks of his foes swell daily, whilst many of his previous adherents, some of the most powerful of his barons among them, abandoned his standard, and the people became more and more discontented at the misery to which the universal disorder he had caused condemned them. Open hostilities had commenced, a great battle was to be fought, when suddenly the famous papal legate, Pandulph, arrived at Dover, made his way to the royal camp, and offered the king pardon and grace, on condition of his immediate submission; or if he refused,

immediate deposition and ruin. John saw at last the odds were too great against him, for he could anticipate little support from his own subjects, and so grown suddenly docile, promised to fulfil every slightest particular required by the pope.

The interview with Pandulph took place on the 23rd of May, 1213. The king not only agreed to reinstate Langton in the primacy, but that every banished or dispossessed priest should be immediately recalled, and fully indemnified for all losses the royal acts had caused him. John further promised to defray the whole cost of the war, and paid the legate eight thousand pounds by way of a first instalment for the pope. The triumph of Rome was complete. Two days later John resigned the crowns of England and Ireland into Pandulph's hands, or rather laid them, together with one thousand silver marks, at his feet, to receive them back under vassalage to the holy see. The legate retained the insignia of royalty for five days, and finally restored them on the sixth as a free gift from the pope; then first condescending to have the one thousand silver marks removed from the floor of the church in which the interview had taken place, and where they had been left lying the whole interval. England was thenceforth to be a papal feoff in perpetuity, and pay a yearly tribute of one thousand marks in recognition of the fact. Not till this treaty had been solemnly sworn to and published, did the king receive absolution from the ban, and the king of France commanded to suspend further hostilities.

Thus was England bent to the yoke, and there now

remained no sovereign in Europe who had not either with, or against his will, acknowledged the absolute supremacy of Rome. The famous maxim of Gregory VII., "Summi Pontificis voluntas decretum est," (The will of the Pope is law), was realised; and Innocent's not less famous aphorism:—"the pope is the sun, and temporal rulers like unto the moon, receiving their light, like her, from the greater orb," made a fact.

If Innocent thus treated those beyond the pale of his authority, in what manner he acted towards the church that was placed immediately under it, the reader may readily imagine. He appointed or deposed the great prelates at will; whilst the lower clergy, his "brethren in Christ," were to him as though of some utterly inferior race. He no longer permitted the clergy attending ecclesiastical councils (we may cite that of the Lateran, summoned in 1215),* to discuss the questions upon which they had been convened; he simply stated his own views, to which all were required to give their immediate adherence.

Through the Inquisition he ruled men's souls, as through the kings he dictated their political acts, until no one dared gainsay his will, or do aught but as he

* This council was attended by seventy-one archbishops, four hundred and twelve bishops, eight hundred abbots, many temporal princes, and ambassadors from all the crowned heads of Europe; one thousand five hundred dignitaries in all. At the opening, the crowd was so great the bishop of Amalfi was crushed to death in it, and a more imposing display of ecclesiastical grandeur had never been witnessed. Yet there was no thought of debating the measures proposed; the pope had his decrees read to the assembly, and it registered them with acclamation, after the manner of well-drilled, well-fed slaves.

commanded, for terror of the scaffold and the torture chamber, presided over by the dread Dominicans.

Innocent III. died in 1216, in the very zenith of power, and no thought ever assailing him that that power would ever be stricken or overturned. Nor could the fall of papal despotism have been then foreseen; his immediate successors trod devoutly in his footsteps, and the supremacy of Rome seemed established for ever. The contest in which it was soon to be involved with the Emperor Frederick II., seemed for the moment but the more to increase and strengthen it; but its foundations were undermined, and downfall was approaching.

Of Honorius III. (1216-1227), who next wore the tiara, nothing of interest is recorded, unless that he was a merciless persecutor of heretics by the stake and the axe of the Inquisition. Under his pontificate originated the differences with Kaiser Frederick II., which at first seemed to promise the German monarch would be a "devoted son of the church." The quarrel did not come to an open rupture until the reign of Gregory IX. (1227-1241), a Count Segna by birth, related closely by blood, and still more by character, to Innocent III. The kaiser had promised Honorius to commence a crusade against the infidels, but deferred the undertaking year after year. Gregory sharply remonstrated at the procrastination, and as Frederick still found pretexts for delay, threatened to pronounce the ban against him. The reason of the pope's impatience, was not any peculiar religious fervour against the paynim, but the desire of getting the emperor out of the way, his majesty

having grown inconveniently powerful, through his possessions in Sicily and South Italy. Frederick saw this very clearly; but to avoid forcing things to extremities, finally yielded, collected an army at Brundusium in 1227, and set sail for Syria. But the emperor fell ill of an epidemic, with several other persons on board his vessel, and the symptoms became so serious, that he put back to Otranto, and sought restoration at the baths of Puzzioli. Gregory declared this delay a mere trick, and passed sentence of excommunication on Frederick. The latter defended himself in a manifesto, in which he characterised the papal despotism in somewhat strong terms, but at the same time despatched an embassy to Rome, to express his resolve to prosecute the crusade as soon as the state of his health would allow; but this did not satisfy the pope, who demanded his instantaneous departure. Frederick naturally did not obey, and this hesitation, added to the unpalatable words of the manifesto, so incensed His Holiness, that he made the ban to include a general interdict, and not only commanded all good Catholics to hold no communication with the disobedient sovereign, but strictly prohibited any priest from performing the offices of the church, in any place desecrated by the arch offender's presence.

Frederick responded by another manifesto, and directed his clergy to fulfil their spiritual duties as before, without regard to the papal orders, under penalty of displacement, and a dungeon. Gregory was so exasperated by the words of his antagonist, which levied a blow on the whole papal system, whilst they denounced the

priesthood as the main cause of all troubles and disorders, that he determined to anathematise the emperor a third time, and with still more imposing solemnity. He therefore proceeded, at the head of his cardinals and the whole clergy of Rome, to St. Peter's, to read the ban, and extinguish the symbolical candles; but the kaiser had partisans even in St. Peter's peculiar city: and they, in the very midst of the awful ceremony, forced their way into the cathedral, fell on the pope and the princes of the church, and so roughly handled them, they were glad to escape from Rome for some length of time. In the meantime Kaiser Frederick recovered his health, and started once more on the proposed crusade; but the pope was more enraged than ever at this new presumption; he had anticipated the emperor, before setting out, would have humbly entreated absolution, as no excommunicated person was justified in undertaking any pious work. Gregory sent messenger after messenger to Palestine, commanding the military religious orders, the priests and people there, to give no aid or countenance to the unhallowed undertaking. Nor was this deemed sufficient. He next incited the Lombards, always ready enough for such provocations, to shake off the imperial authority, and marched in person, at the head of a considerable army, into Lower Italy. Thus arose the struggle between Guelphs and Ghibellines; a struggle which desolated the unhappy peninsular for centuries.

The adherents of the emperor were entitled Ghibellines, from Waiblingen, in Suabia, the original birthplace of Kaiser Conrad, the founder of the Hohenstaufens

dynasty; the Guelphs were so named from Welf (Guelpho in Italian), duke of Bavaria, husband of that Countess Mathilda by whom the church had so richly profited. Notwithstanding the threatened storm at home, the kaiser set out for Acre, marched in triumph on to Joppa, and, after a great battle there, made peace with the sultan on the most satisfactory conditions, the latter yielding to his conqueror not only the province and city of Jerusalem, but the whole country lying between it and Joppa, Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Acre. This success, instead of softening Gregory's wrath, did but the more exasperate it. He immediately laid Jerusalem itself under the interdict, and was but too sorry a plot contrived by the Templars did not succeed. But the sultan, whom they would have made a party to it, was far too honourable to rid himself of an enemy by assassination, and immediately informed Frederick of the contemplated treason. This scheme frustrated, Frederick made his way to Jerusalem, and placed the crown he had won on his own brow with his own hands, as no priest would perform that office, or even read mass for him. In the mean time the report was spread through Italy that he had been taken prisoner in Syria, or was actually dead, and the pope took every means possible to induce the German princes to choose a new emperor whilst anarchy prevailed throughout Italy. But Frederick suddenly made his appearance at Brundusium on Italian ground, soon collected a considerable body of troops, and made himself master of all the southern portion of the peninsula, then entered the states of the church and destroyed all before him with fire and

sword. Gregory, very ill at ease, offered to remove the ban, and absolve his refractory son, on payment by the latter of 100,000 ounces of gold; for popes rarely consent to grant unpaid favours. Frederick, who was careless enough where money was concerned, agreed to the proposal, and peace was restored. It did not long last, however, for the pope secretly persuaded Henry, eldest son of the emperor, to join the Lombards, then at war with his father; but a formal rupture did not take place until two years later, for the emperor had overpowered his rebellious son, and transferred him, for life-long captivity with wife and child, to the castle of San Felice. The pope then continued to incite the Lombard cities to another insurrection in 1236, and though Frederick won a brilliant victory at Cortenuova (26th, 27th November, 1237), the siege of the fortified cities—Milan, Bologna, Piacenza, and Brescia, lasted so long that the imperial troops were decimated by fever and hardships.

Gregory hoped this unfavourable state of things might be turned to his own profit, whilst it would prevent the imperial influence becoming predominant in Italy. He was more than ever incensed with Frederick, who, after conquering the island of Sardinia from the Saracens and thus acquiring legal right to dispose of it at his will, had constituted his son Enzio king. The pope, however, declared it was a feoff of Rome, and demanded its restitution to the holy see, whilst he enforced the demand by pronouncing the ban against Frederick II. once more. In this anathema, which was published on Palm Sunday, 1239, the Hohenstaufen was denounced as "the enemy of the church, and an usurper

of the patrimony of St. Peter." The pope commanded the vassals of the empire to refuse longer obedience to "him who ought to be regarded rather as a pagan than a Christian." The Bull of excommunication was filled with charges of murder, perjury, cruelty, falsehood, sacrilege, idolatry, of every conceivable crime in short, against the greatest of the Hohenstaufen. Such insults could not pass unnoticed, and Frederick issued a manifesto in which he likened the pope to "a monster whose greed would never be satisfied until it had absorbed the whole world," with various unpalatable truths of the like character. Frederick had copies of this document sent to all the princes in Christendom, and others posted on the doors of all the hotels de ville and churches throughout his dominions, "so that every one may see what a befouled priest is this pope, and how little of St. Peter successorship hangeth to him." The facts exhibited in the imperial protest were a bitter draught for the pope to swallow, and he resolved, in his rage, to adopt the course of his great predecessor Innocent III., and declare the refractory sovereign deposed; at the same time instructing the begging friars to spread themselves over the length and breadth of the empire, and stir up the people to rebellion, whilst he offered the forfeited crown of Germany to Louis XI. of France. But Kaiser Frederick was no King John, nor Gregory IX. an Innocent III. The kaiser kept his crown despite interdicts and monks, displacing every priest who dared obey the commands of Rome, and drove the brown and black frocked incendiaries out of his dominions, too often minus their ears; whilst the clergy who persisted in publishing the

papal Bull, did so under the penalty of the gibbet. Having re-established order in Germany, he marched with a powerful army over the Alps, chastised the Lombards, then advanced on towards Rome, conquering and wasting all the country as he went. The pope, more enraged than he had ever been before, and feeling quite safe behind the fortifications of his capital, with a good army to defend them, resolved to call a general council for all the bishops of Christendom to meet and anathematise the emperor. Such a design, of course, could not be kept secret from Frederick, and as a great many prelates, especially from France, Spain, and England, had gathered at Genoa to proceed by water to Rome, for all the land roads thither were commanded by the imperial troops, he directed his son Enzio, viceroy of Sardinia, and Grand-admiral of the imperial navy, to seize the Genoese vessels as soon as the bishops were safely on board. Enzio came up with them close to the island of Meliora, secured his prizes, and gained a complete success. All the bishops were taken prisoners, some of the number, known as the most determined foes of the emperor, were thrown overboard and drowned, the rest despatched to lower Italy, and consigned to various of the imperial strongholds. This occurred in 1241, and the news of the cruel reverse so broke the spirit of the pope that he never rallied from it, and expired soon after; but remembering that he was already upwards of ninety years of age, this will not much surprise us.

The star of the emperor was clearly in the ascendant, and the Sacred College did not venture to elect a new pontiff inimical to him;—it even offered him the choice

between Cardinals Godfrey and Romanus. He decided for the former, who was at once proclaimed as Celestin IV., and who immediately announced his readiness to conclude peace with the Germans. Unhappily, this proposal could not take effect, as he died seven days after his coronation, doubtless of poison, administered by some of the adverse faction. Then followed an interregnum of eighteen months before the college of cardinals, which was split up into the two opposing factions of Guelphs and Ghibellines, could come to a decision. The honour at length fell to a Genoese count, Cardinal Fiescho, a supposed adherent of the emperor,—though not until he had firmly secured the tiara did his real politics appear. He assumed the title of Innocent IV., and at once opened negotiations for the liberation of the prelates still held captive in lower Italy. Frederick declared himself quite willing to grant their freedom,—but, naturally, on condition of his own release from the ban; whilst Innocent insisted their liberation must be unconditional, when he would grant the absolution as a free boon from the church. The emperor lost patience at this quibbling, collected his troops and marched upon Rome, when Innocent, fearing to share the fate of the bishops, disguised himself, and contrived to make good his escape to the Genoese vessels, which were lying off Civita Vecchia, ready to bear him to Lyons. Then, safe on French soil, he summoned a council, which was, however, but scantily attended. In spite of this, and in defiance of the protest of the emperor's ambassador, Thaddeus of Sessa, who with eloquent indignation denounced the wrong done his master, the pope pronounced the ban

against Frederick and declared his sceptre forfeit. "When we," he exclaimed exultingly, "shall have bound and laid prostrate this huge dragon (Frederick), we may with small ado trample under foot all the smaller serpents." In these few words we have an epitome of the whole papal system; and Kaiser Frederick, feeling this, issued a second manifesto,* in which he protested, firstly, "the papal ban was null and void, since the pope united in his own person the separate functions of accuser, witness and judge;" and, secondly, that "there could be no peace in Christendom until the whole priesthood was brought to the apostolic life of the early centuries." Angered more and more at this unsavoury reasoning of his antagonist, Innocent refused the profferred mediation of King Louis XI. of France, and called on the princes of Germany to elect a new emperor. Frederick II., tired of the endless struggle, and willing to go as far on the path of conciliation as possible, offered to resign his throne to his son Conrad, and set off to Palestine to do battle with the Infidels; but this was not sufficient for the pope, who contemplated nothing less than the complete extirpation of the whole Hohenstaufen family, as the enemies of the papacy. Then commenced the war between Guelph and Ghibelline once more. The priests of Germany, to whom the clear-headed Frederick had long been a grievous thorn in the flesh, sided with Rome, and by their efforts things went so far that in 1246 a part of the electors chose Heinrich Raspe, generally called the "Pfaffen König" (the

* Petrus da Vineis, Frederick's chancellor, was the author of this manifesto.

priest's king), as kaiser. The pope aided the pretender with considerable subsidies, and the clergy of the empire assisted him liberally; but so detested was he by the great mass of the population, that when defeated by Frederick's son Conrad, at Ulm (Frederick himself was in Italy), in 1247, his cause would have been completely lost, even had he not died so shortly afterwards. This failure did not at all dishearten the pope, who once more put up the crown of Germany to the highest bidder. For a long time no candidate appeared. Otto of Gueldres, and Henry of Brabant,—one of whom Innocent hoped to secure,—proved equally indisposed to enact the part of a sham king to please His Holiness; but at length William, Count of Holland, caught at the bait, and once more the papal coffers were opened wide to support the new minion. He was actually crowned in 1248, but found himself so harassed by the army of the brave Conrad, that he was glad to make good his retreat into Holland. But the triumphs of the Hohenstaufen in Germany were more than neutralised by the events taking place beyond the Alps, though Frederick himself commanded his army there. After suppressing a rebellion in Sicily, fomented by the pope, he was about to deal with the revolted Lombards, when a series of events occurred which completely broke the brave kaiser's heart. The city of Parma, which he had invested, managed, by a sudden, well-contrived sortie, to put his forces to the rout: this alone was a serious reverse. The pope succeeding in gaining over the Bolognese for the Lombard cause, though until then they had always been faithful to the emperor. Then King Enzio took the field for

his father against his subjects, but he was made prisoner in an engagement,* and consigned to close captivity.

At length, and this perhaps was the most cruel blow of all, Innocent succeeded, by a heavy bribe, in corrupting Frederick's most trusted friend and counsellor, Petrus da Vineis, and induced him to attempt poisoning his master. The plot did not succeed. Da Vineis was discovered in the act, when his eyes were put out, and he was cast into prison in Pisa, where he killed himself, by dashing his head against the wall. But the emperor's belief in his good fortune was for ever destroyed. Once more he set himself to regain his lost influence, but then suddenly fell ill (doubtless, a more capable poisoner had been found), and died on the 13th of December, 1250, at Florence, in the arms of his natural son, Manfred.

The Hohenstaufen was vanquished, and the pope rejoiced almost frantically at the victory. "The heavens shout with gladness and the earth dances, for Herod is dead," he wrote. "Now, not one of that accursed race, with our will, shall ever possess the empire, or Suabia, or even Sicily." Indeed, the imperialists seemed effectually overcome, and Innocent abandoned Lyons to take up his abode in Rome. Still there were two Hohenstaufen left,—the brave Manfred, and Conrad IV., who had succeeded to his father's crown. Innocent immediately fulminated an anathema against them, for no other cause than that they were their father's sons; but

* Enzio remained in prison until his death, 15th of March, 1272, upwards of twenty-two years after his capture, though his father, Frederick, had offered as ransom a silver ring, large enough to encircle the walls of the city.

they had to bear all the consequences the terrible decree brought in its train. Universal disorder prevailed in Germany; insurrections arose on all sides; the country was torn by ceaseless feuds. Conrad proceeded to Italy, to secure at least Sicily and Apulia; made a treaty of alliance with Manfred, subdued Sicily in 1252, Naples in October, 1253, Benevento shortly afterwards, and prepared for a campaign in the centre and north of the peninsula, when his death, in May, 1254, put a stop to all his plans. Another Hohenstaufen was removed, and there now only remained his infant son Conradin, and Manfred. The pope declared the crown of Sicily, as that of a reverted fief, at his own disposal; and offered it successively to Count Charles of Anjou, Earl Richard of Cornwall, and finally to Prince Edward of England. But those gallant peers did not catch at a bait so much beyond their reach; the pope might have as well proposed to them certain vassal lands in the moon. Innocent did not therefore grow idle, but sent an army into south Italy and Sicily, and within a short time brought all the provinces to submission. But at the very moment when he believed these broad lands were for ever merged into the states of the church, Manfred, who had been collecting an army at Luceria, a Saracen colony in Sicily, fell upon the papal mercenaries at Foggia, and gained a complete victory over them, December 2nd, 1254. This reverse caused the death of Pope Innocent IV., the rage it threw him into bringing on an attack of apoplexy, of which he expired eleven days later.

Innocent IV. had nearly become supreme ruler of the

whole of Italy, and might boast of having as completely humbled the German empire as his predecessor Innocent III.: but when the excitement of the contest was over, and his own last hour was approaching, he must have felt that the huge colossus, on whose head he stood, already began to tremble beneath him, for the manifestoes of the great Frederick had brought truths to light, which until then had been hidden behind a veil no one dared to lift. The very foundations of the papacy were threatened, the efficacy of the ban questioned, and a desire that the priesthood should return to the simplicity of apostolic times, was already making fast way among the people. How bitter must have been the thought of death to the pope's soul whilst one of the Hohenstaufen was still unconquered; to die, indeed, at the very moment when Manfred had almost annihilated the papal army. Could he have seen into the future, could he have learnt how both Manfred and Conradin, twelve years later, would alike be destroyed, thanks to the perseverance of Clement IV., he might well have been consoled. Had still a little more foreknowledge been granted, then, indeed, this consolation would but have been lost in a still more cruel disappointment, could he have seen beyond the death of the two last of the Hohenstaufen, to the consequences it would bring, the destruction of one of the chief supports of papal power—belief in papal omnipotence!

On the death of Innocent, the cardinals again elected a Count de Segna to the vacant throne. The new pontiff assumed the name of Alexander IV., and reigned from 1254 to 1261, but he poorly replaced his predecessor.

He excommunicated Manfred, and placed all south Italy under interdict, but this rigour was to little effect. Manfred drove the Roman legates out of Sicily, and defeated the papal troops, though a great crucifix was borne in front of their ranks. Naples was next conquered by him; and in August, 1258, the brave bastard was crowned king of Sicily, at Palermo, where not only all the barons of his dominions and delegates from the cities, but nearly all the bishops of Sicily and south Italy, were gathered to do him honour. The bishops remained faithful to Manfred notwithstanding the interdict, and did not abandon his cause, though the pope proceeded to excommunicate and depose them also. For the first time the church thunderbolts proved quite innocuous; they had been somewhat too much abused of late, and in nearly every instance to serve the worldly ambition of the papacy. The same evil fortune awaited the holy see in the north as in the south of Italy. The famous Czelino da Romano, chief of the Ghibeline party, obtained a decisive victory over the Guelphs in Lombardy, and exhibited so little respect for the papal anathema, that he had several of the episcopal prisoners, taken in arms, and even certain papal legates executed, and others condemned to perpetual captivity. In Germany, however, the pope's credit stood higher than ever, for on the death of William of Holland several of the electors hesitated to acknowledge Conradin, the last Hohenstaufen, as king of Germany; and when the pope intimated, through the archbishop of Mayence, that whoever voted for Frederick's grandson must do so under penalty of the ban, whilst the vote would remain

invalid, the threat had the desired effect, and no one ventured to declare for him.

Alexander IV. died in 1261, after experiencing the bitter mortification of seeing the very States of the church pay tribute to Manfred, who, despite ban and interdict, gained the battle of Montaperto, September 4, 1260, and made himself master of Tuscany. Then succeeded Urban IV. (1261-64), the son of a cobbler, but as proud as the proudest of his predecessors. He at once fulminated a third excommunication against Manfred, and even preached a crusade for his destruction, but Manfred defeated the crusaders, and obliged the pope to take refuge in Orvieto. After Urban's death, came Clement IV. (1265-68) to the throne of St. Peter, who devoted himself to the destruction of the Hohenstaufen, and, in imitation of Innocent IV., invited the count of Anjou, brother of Louis IX. of France, to take possession of Sicily and south Italy. The count accepted the proposal, his brother offering the aid of a French army, and so taking ship with the latter, arrived in Italy, and proceeded to Rome, where he was anointed king of Naples and Sicily by the hands of the pope, January 6, 1266. Manfred, with an army composed partly of Germans, Saracens, and Neapolitans, advanced to meet his new antagonist, and a battle took place at Benevento, February 26th. The Germans and Saracens fought as bravely as they always fought, but the Neapolitans had been previously gained over by the monks, and in the midst of the engagement marched over to the enemy. Thus was the day lost for Manfred, who, seeing his forces thrown into hopeless panic, rushed into the

thickest of the slaughter, and died a soldier's death. Some days afterwards his lifeless body was found, covered with wounds. The pope ordered him to be buried, as an excommunicate, by the bridge of Benevento, as unworthy a more honourable grave; but the people, the very French soldiers, took shame at such an enmity, which could not even be satisfied by the death of its victim, and so heaped up stone upon stone on the spot until a monumental pile arose, which obtained the name of the Rocca delle rose. So ended Manfred, and the fortunes of his house. His three sons were imprisoned by the count of Anjou, and so kept until their death, thirty-one years later. But one Hohenstaufen still existed at liberty, the young Conradin, born in 1252. The people of the two Sicilies, in a few years, growing weary of the tyranny of Anjou, invited Conradin to reclaim his portion in the Hohenstaufen inheritance. Full of courage and enthusiasm, the young prince crossed the Alps, in the summer of 1267, with his friend Frederick of Baden, and an army of 10,000 men. He was enthusiastically welcomed in Lombardy, and neither the pope nor Anjou felt at ease. His first battle had been won against the French at Porte de Valle, and a second at Tagliacozza, August 23, 1268. Unhappily, on this occasion Conradin's troops dispersed in search of plunder, when the Comte de Valery, Anjou's field-marshal, fell on them with his reserve in the midst of their disorder, and a complete rout ensued. Conradin and his friend Frederick endeavoured to escape to the sea shore, thence to proceed to Sicily, but were discovered by Frangipanni, prince of Asturia, on attempting to sell a

valuable ring, were at once taken prisoners, and delivered to Anjou. Clement's joy was unbounded, but he did not rest satisfied until Conradin and his friend had been made to pay for their temerity on the scaffold.* So passed away the great house of Hohenstaufen. Its blood is on St. Peter's throne.

We have seen how the popes secured supreme power in their own hands, and with what manner of humility and moderation they exercised it. We have now to regard those causes by which the papal power gradually sank to its decline, until completely submerged in the flood of the French revolution.

* The pope was asked by Charles of Anjou in what manner the captive princes should be treated, since the legal authorities who had considered the case, with but one exception, unanimously declared they ought to be regarded as prisoners of war: "Prince Conradin had been taken in arms fighting for his inheritance, and therefore could not be considered as a rebel." The pope laconically replied, "Vita Conradini, mors Caroli; mors Conradini, vita Caroli;"—(the life of Conrad is the death of Charles; the death of Conrad is the life of Charles). Then Anjou no longer hesitated in the course he should take.

CHAPTER III.

FALL OF THE PAPAL DESPOTISM.

The fall of papal despotism has been very generally ascribed wholly to the Reformation effected by Martin Luther, but this we hold no just appreciation of the actual facts. Kaiser Frederick's various manifestoes had already awakened men's minds to the arbitrary pretensions of the papacy. The successors of St. Peter might, indeed, hope to destroy their most relentless adversaries in destroying the Hohenstaufen dynasty, but was not the very struggle to do so the unconscious means of creating a still more redoubtable enemy—enlightenment? Then came all the manifold influences of the crusades. The popes had expected by their means to extend the influence of the see of Rome over Asia as it already existed in Europe, but, instead of this, these knight-errant expeditions were the means of spreading a wider knowledge of the world both among those who entered on them and among those who listened to their adventures in after years, and with this knowledge grew doubts of the justice of papal assumptions. The chief stumbling-block of offence offered by the next succeeding popes was in the extravagance of their court and

their own monstrous arrogance. Boniface VIII., 1294, gave, perhaps, the most notorious examples of these characteristics. Not alone were his coronation robes completely encrusted with gold and precious stones, but he wore under them a suit of complete armour, after the fashion of earthly potentates, and completed the costume with an imperial mantle; thus dressed, and wearing the triple crown, he exhibited himself to the Roman populace, whilst he declared power imperial as well as the sacerdotal authority was represented in his person. His words were even more extravagant than his acts; witness the following excerpt, literally translated from one of the Bulls issued by him:—"God hath placed us above all other princes that in his name we may uproot, destroy, spoil, and scatter; or, on the other hand, build up and cherish. Let not yourselves be cajoled into the belief there are any greater than ourselves; or venture to refuse unconditional obedience to the head of the church. Whoso thus thinketh is a fool; whoso persisteth therein must be cast forth from the sheepfold of the faith as an unbeliever." Such language was too presumptuous for its absurdity not to be apparent, yet Boniface imagined his power so secure that nothing could endanger it. He severally pronounced sentence of excommunication against eight crowned heads. He commenced with Erick of Denmark for the affair of Archbishop Lund: Erick yielded, and humbly sought forgiveness; but His Holiness was most effectually worsted when he came in collision with Phillip le Bel. Phillip, who was no less powerful than clear-headed, was then contesting Normandy with Edward of England,

and the pope seized the opportunity to insist that the princes should make peace with each other, though at the cost of the French monarch. The latter declared the quarrel was no church question, and His Holiness had best keep his counsels for a fitter occasion, and tacitly consented to the very conclusive answer given by his cousin the Count of Artois to the papal proposals; the count had simply torn the parchment in two and thrown the fragments into the fire. The pope was exasperated beyond measure, and became still more so when, shortly afterwards, King Phillip issued a decree that neither gold nor silver, coined or uncoined, should leave France. It was evident the prohibition was made solely with regard to Rome, whither, as we have seen in our first book, sums incalculable were sent annually. A correspondence between pope and king followed, too characteristic but that we must quote a few passages from it. The pope wrote: — "Bishop Boniface to Phillip, king of France. Fear God and obey his commandments. Thou shalt know by these presents that thou art subject unto us in things temporal as in things spiritual: whoso denieth this we denounce as a heretic." Phillip replied, "Phillip, by the grace of God king of France, to Boniface, who setteth himself up as chief pope, small, or eke no greeting whatever. Know, thou archfool, we are subject to no man in things temporal. Whoso thinketh otherwise, we hold him as a crackpate and a fool."

In much the same style were the ensuing dozen epistles of this correspondence, in which His Holiness and His Majesty mutually abused each other.

The affair, of course, was not to be ended by letters merely. The pope assembled his cardinals, and resolved with them to excommunicate and depose the king. The Bull to this effect, and which, among other amenities, entitles Phillip a "profitless fellow," was sent by a nuncio to France, and Boniface enjoyed the hope that under threat of ban and interdict his rebellious son would assuredly kiss the rod. Phillip, however, without more ado, at once threw the nuncio into prison, had the Bull burnt by the hands of the common hangman, and immediately summoned a parliament, in which the nobility, clergy, and burghers were represented. The question was then in due form submitted to its decision: "whether Phillip or Boniface was lord of the realm of France?" And the unanimous reply at once was given: "Your majesty is our lord and king." Nor was this all; in the course of the discussion such home truths were uttered, especially by the famous Guillaume de Plessis, that His Holiness might have swooned with horror, or have heard them whilst Chancellor Roguet even proposed to dethrone him as "a heretic, and a creature half distraught." Such language had never been employed before, and it probably suggested to the people a very different view of the papacy to any they had yet entertained. The pope, replied, indeed, with another Bull of anathema, cursed the king and his issue to the fourth generation, laid all France under an interdict, absolved the French from their oath of fidelity, called on the king of England and the count of Flanders to make war upon France, and, finally, made over the doomed kingdom to Albrecht, emperor of Germany, of course under

the usual condition that he should conquer it. But even these energetic measures failed, for as the parliament and people of France were heartily devoted to their king, not only was there no insurrection within the realm, but the princes, whose aid had been invoked by the holy see, thought fit to maturely reflect before picking the chesnut out of the fire for His Holiness. Boniface raged fiercely; but his rage was to cost him dear. King Phillip sent his chancellor, Rogaret, with Count Sciara Colonna (a personal enemy of the pope), under pretext of certain friendly negociations, but, in truth, for quite other than friendly objects. Boniface was staying at his country seat, Anagni, in the Campagna. Rogaret and Colonna, with their followers, to whom was soon added a considerable number of Italian nobles, friends of Colonna, surrounded the palace, then forced their way into the sala, where the pope, alarmed by the disturbance without, had calmly taken his seat, though not before he had assumed his full pontifical robes, and triple crown, and grasped the crucifix in his right hand. But the aggressors he had now to face paid a like indifference to his costume and his curses, seized him in the name of the French king, set him on a wretched horse, his face to its tail, and so paraded him through the streets amidst the laughter and mockery of the people of Anagni, finally thrusting him into a dungeon, where he was left for three days almost without food. In the mean time his partisans, learning what had taken place, gathered their forces, succeeded in rescuing him from captivity, and led him in triumph to Rome. But

his mental and bodily powers had been both too severely tried; he went mad, and was found, a few days later, dead in his chamber, his grey hair dabbled in blood, his lips covered with foam, and the marks of his teeth in the staff he held. So ended Boniface VIII.

Still more inimical to the pretensions of the papacy than even the insane arrogance of Boniface, was the transference of the papal residence to Avignon,—an emigration that has not inaptly been called the Babylonian captivity of the church. By bribery and intrigue, King Phillip succeeded in elevating Bertrand, archbishop of Bordeaux, a Gascon, to the papal throne in 1304, as Clement V.; and he, having previously arranged the matter with his patron, declared Italy, and Rome especially, far too distracted with sanguinary feuds to afford him a safe residence; refused to leave France, and summoned a council of cardinals at Lyons. The cardinals obeyed, the pope was crowned, and then took up his residence, first at the latter city, then at Bordeaux, then at Poictiers, and finally, in 1308, at Avignon, which, together with the surrounding province of Venaissin, had become, partly by gift, partly by purchase, church patrimony. It is very easy to divine King Phillip's policy, in thus domiciling the popes in France: he had resolved, "St. Peter's successor should only dance in future to his piping;" and desirous, above all things, of uniting the crown of Germany to that of France, as in the days of Charlemagne, he believed the pope might materially aid that object with the required excommunications, &c. He had determined, moreover, on the destruction of the

Templars, in order to seize their possessions; and the assistance of a pope devoted to his interests was not less necessary to this latter scheme.

Clement V. did everything the king required, and his immediate successors were alike tractable. Their pride was cruelly humbled; but they endeavoured to disguise the fact, under the still greater arrogance with which they treated all other worldly potentates, especially the German kaisers. Clement laid the Emperor Henry VII. of Luxemburg under the ban, for maintaining the imperial claims to Sicily; and contrived to gain over Henry's confessor, a Dominican, to poison his sovereign in a sacramental wafer.*

His successor, John XXII., the son of a cobbler of Cahers, carried things with a still higher hand. After the death of the Luxemburg, the candidature for the imperial throne lay between Ludwig the Bavarian, and Friederich of Austria. But Phillip of France, who now hoped to secure the German crown for himself, caused the pope to intervene in the contest, and invited the two rivals to submit their claims before the apostolic throne at Avignon, that they might be fittingly decided; and as neither Ludwig nor Friedrich paid any regard to this injunction, Clement at once declared the empire vacant, and himself its sole curator, until a new election had been effected. This fresh injunction was as little heeded in Germany as the former one. The pope then excom-

* The generous monarch, on feeling the poison begin to take effect, cried to his murderer, "In the very essence of life thou hast given me death: depart, before my people come."

municated the two disobedient princes, and endeavoured to win over the Electors to the candidature of the French king. But all his efforts were fruitless: on the contrary, indeed, they made "the Bavarian" come to an amicable agreement with his Austrian antagonist, and ultimately obtain the sole sovereignty of Germany. Thereupon the pope fell into a very fury of indignation, anathematising the new emperor a second and a third time. Ludwig, on his part, called a general ecclesiastical council, and by his direction the famous canonists, Marsilius of Padua, and Johannes of Ianduno, drew up a manifesto, showing that St. Peter himself had never possessed greater authority than the other apostles; and further, that the whole priesthood,—simple curates, archbishops, popes,—were spiritually equal. This raised a new tempest at Avignon. The pope denounced "these so-styled doctors of the church, these professors of canon law, as worthless fellows, sons of Belial,—braggarts; a spawn, begotten by the father of lies, blasphemers against God, and pestilential captains of heretics;" anathematised the emperor a fourth time, and again invited the Electors to choose another sovereign for Germany. Ludwig answered, by marching with an army into Italy, where he was crowned king at Milan, and emperor at Rome; at the same time formally declaring Pope John deposed, and appointed in his stead the Minorite monk, Renalucci da Korvara, whom the Romans received with enthusiasm. The new pontiff assumed the name of Nicholas V., performed the coronation of his patron in all solemnity, and burnt the Avignon anti-pope in effigy, after laying him

and all his adherents under the ban. John fulminated the like curses in return, denouncing his rival as a son of hell, and the emperor as the incarnate offspring of Belial.

Thus things proceeded with little variation until 1335, when John XXII. died, and Benedict XII., son of a pastrycook at Fois, succeeded him. The new French pope would gladly have made peace with the emperor the more willingly, as the latter was prepared to make considerable concessions; but the king of France totally forbade any overtures of the kind, and commanded the immediate renewal of the excommunication pronounced by John. The world might then have clearly seen how mere a tool of the French monarch the successors of the apostles had become. But the German princes took heart of grace, and meeting under the presidence of their emperor at Reussen, on the Rhine, in the summer of 1338, unanimously decreed the law, which remained ever after in force throughout the empire:—that whoever might be raised to the imperial dignity by the majority of the Electors, should thenceforth be regarded as legitimate king and emperor, without need of any previous consent or subsequent recognition by the pope. This was the first firm step towards the overthrow of papal supremacy in temporal matters; and though Clement VI. (1342-52), successor of Benedict XII., a passionate, arrogant man, invoked the most terrific curses on the head of kaiser Ludwig,* the resolutions of the electors

* We venture to quote the following sample of this anathema:—"We call on divine Omnipotence to overcome Ludwig's arrogance; to crush him beneath Its hand, and deliver him into the hands of his enemies. May the Lord smite him with madness, blindness, and foolish-

were not affected; and the apostolic lightnings glanced off with merely a harmless flash and an innocuous echo. This very anathema was the last any pope ventured to denounce against a German emperor.

Such over much cursing, cursing too, for such very common-place objects, led inevitably to this result, that men grew pretty well indifferent to the papal bolts, and chiefly for this cause was the residence at Avignon, when excommunications had to be launched by wholesale at the bidding of the French king, a very fatal arrangement for the papal prestige. A still more fatal circumstance was the demoralisation rampant at the Avignon court. A clearer insight was gradually growing up among mankind, and the veil of sanctity which had so long enwrapped the papacy, was, fold by fold, unwound from the great idol.

Was it indeed, possible, that reverence should be entertained for a John XXII., who, as shameless as he was arbitrary, held the vilest trickery justifiable, so it filled his coffers; or for a Clement VI., an Urban V., and how many more, who were so demoralised by every vice, that Petrarch, Baluzius, Mezeray, can find no words damning enough to represent the riot and abominations of their court. It is no marvel men arose who, like the English Wickliffe, declared the church could assuredly well flourish without a pope, since there were no

ness. May the heavens send down their lightnings upon him, and the wrath of God consume him in this world and the next. May the earth open and engulph him, all the elements turn against him, and within one generation may his name die out from among men. May his home be desolate, his children slain by their foes, even in his sight, even before his very eyes."

longer any good ones. No marvel their fellow Christians eagerly listened to such teachers, and shielded them from all the efforts of papal tyranny.

A stiller, stronger nail, in the coffin of ecclesiastical despotism, was made by the contempt created by the church schisms. Of these, the so-called Great Schism was the longest in duration; it extended from 1378 to 1429, and during the greater part of the period there were three contemporaneous popes, each ruling and reigning from his peculiar seat. Each of the three announced himself as the only true pope, and cursed his rivals to the lowest depths of hell. Thoughtful men in Christendom might well ask themselves which of the triad was the real successor of St. Peter, and which liars and deceivers; others went further in their questioning, and came in conclusion to the idea the whole papal institution was a mere profitless comedy.* Satires upon satires showered fast upon the popes; pasquinades were sung, or, at least, written on them; and these irrefutable dialectics did more injury to their cause than even the stern exposures made at the great councils held at Pisa, Constance, and Bale.†

* See book: Pope and Infallibility.

† The very street boys of Florence sang, "Papa Martino non vale un quatrino." Martin, the pope, is not worth a groat. The initials of Pope Nicholas V., N.V.P., were said to indicate "nil valet papa" (the pope is good for naught). The writings of a Puci, Poggio, and Valla, in Italy, of a Rablais and Etienne in France, of a Brandt, Fischart, Hämmerlin, and Wurner, in Germany, were literally devoured, notwithstanding their "scandalous" contents. Under the very eyes of the pope, who had no power to repress the new abomination, there flourished the greatest pasquinade makers the world had ever seen—

Yet several popes employed all the means at their command to rescue the falling prestige of the papacy. Pius II. (1458-1464) was among the most energetic of these; but whilst Cardinal Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini, he had dealt such telling blows at its abuses, that when pope, with all his acuteness and learning, he could never make good the injury.* All effort indeed, could be but of little avail; for knowledge was once more awakening, whilst its light was gradually diffused abroad by the newly-established universities. We need not remind the reader that the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks now took place, when the Greek population fled in vast numbers into Italy, taking with them a rich treasure of Greek manuscripts and Greek learning. But it was in the crowning glory of the fifteenth century, in the invention of printing, that superstition and despotism found their most terrible foe. From the first moment the popes had an instinctive dread of the press.

the famous Pasquino himself, and his coadjutor, Marsorio. Their caustic wit, their relentless satire, gave more cruel wounds to the papacy, perhaps, than any amount of abstract reasoning.

Pasquin, was the name of a witty tailor of Rome, who used to write his squibs against Innocent VIII. on a broken column in the city. The column itself was afterwards called Pasquino, and so became a personified god of gibes; as a companion to this, another column was chosen in the capitol, and christened Marsorio (Martis, forum). Thenceforth both mocked away at papal doings to the great satisfaction of their citizen readers, for scarcely a day passed but some malicious dialogue was found inscribed on them.

* On the throne he retracted all his accusations against the papacy made by him at the Council of Bâle, and declared in a special Bull, anno 1463, that those earlier assertions had been "Errores juvenilis animi" ("the misconceptions of a youthful mind").

It was printing, indeed, which destroyed for ever the aureole which had floated around the Vatican. The veil was lifted, and the fetish exposed in its crude absurdity.

Paul II. (1464-71) boldly denounced excommunication against Podiebrad, king of Bohemia, as a Hussite, and solemnly declared him deposed. Podiebrad was the last against whom the sentence of deposition has been pronounced by a bishop of Rome. But the king of Bohemia defeated the Crusaders sent against him; for the emperor of Germany refused them support, and thus the brave Hussite kept his crown. Within a short period the power of the popes sank so low, that Alexander VI. applied to Sultan Badjazet of Turkey (July, 1494), for help against the most Christian king, Charles VIII. of France.

But in the Reformation effected by Martin Luther the papacy received its worst blow, though the reigning pontiff, Leo X., affected to treat the movement as a common-place squabble of the mendicant friars, on the dogma of absolution.

We cannot here enter into the history of the Reformation, and it is scarcely necessary to remind the reader, that by the knowledge spread through the contest between Lutherans and Papists, the whole Christian world was soon filled with profound contempt for the man who occupied St. Peter's throne.* The dread

* Luther generally entitles the pope "Antichrist," or frequently his "Hellishness," or his "Jugglership." The words, "knave," "swine of Epicurus," "ass pope," "Devil's progeny," serve in turn to designate the head of the church for the great doctor.

of ban and purgatorial fires vanished when mankind had learnt to read the Word of God for themselves. Moreover, for the ill-fortune of Rome, the immediate successors of Leo X., Hadrian VI. (1522-23), Clement VII. (1523-34), were but weak rulers, who imposed respect on no man. The best proof how much the fear of papal authority had given place to contempt and scorn, is in the treatment offered the papal residence in 1526, by Charles de Bourbon, Connêtable de France, as commander of an imperial army. His forces consisted of Germans, Spaniards, and Italians—Catholics, with few exceptions; yet, despite this, Rome was stormed and exposed for six months to treatment, compared with which the conduct of the Vandals of old had been gentle and merciful. All respect for the very saints had been foresworn, the churches ransacked for treasure, altars carried off, silver and gold Madonnas, monstrances, reliquaries all seized without any conscientious qualms. Nor was this process of plundering sufficient: nunneries were forced, and transformed into brothels. Some of the soldiery amused their idleness by dressing in the robes of the pope and cardinals, and then marching in mock procession; whilst by way of climax, they made a burlesque election of Doctor Martin Luther for pope.

A certain Ritter Freundsberg, of Suabia, constantly carried a thick gold cord in his pocket, with which he had resolved he said to hang the pope at the first opportunity. The papacy marched with giant strides to its fall; and, though Kaiser Charles V., 1530, condescended to be crowned at Rome by Clement VII., it was the first imperial coronation which had taken place there for

eighty years, and proved the last; nor did the pope gain any political advantage by it.

Paul III. (1534-50) succeeded Clement VII., and he was fated to display the complete impotence which had fallen upon the holy see. His predecessor refused to sanction the first divorce demanded by Henry VIII. of England, for the Emperor Charles V. was a near relative of Queen Catherine, and had determinately opposed it. Then Henry divorced himself, and married the fair Boleyn. The pope retaliated with a Bull of excommunication, laid all England under an interdict, declared the king deposed, and called on all Christendom to make war on him. But neither the emperor of Germany, nor the king of France, were disposed to attempt such a war; for the time when the thunders of the Vatican struck home, and made other effect than empty noise, was long since past. The only result of the ban was, that Henry and England cast off all vestige of allegiance to Rome, and became forthwith Protestant. However false the position was into which Paul then fell, he contrived to make good the rehabilitation of papal authority, by establishing the Order of the Jesuits. Though the founder was Ignatius Loyola, its essential "jesuistry" was instilled into the fraternity by the popes themselves.

The Jesuits were created. Their chief vow was unconditional obedience, their chief aim the destruction of all heresy, especially the Protestant. It was the Jesuits who opposed science with systematised stultification, and the light of truth with pious darkness; they it was who, as confessors to kings and great potentates, as professors at universities, and tutors to the

future governors of mankind, endeavoured to tread out all free inquiry, and restore the submissive ignorance of the middle ages. Into their hands all ecclesiastical power soon lapsed; and but for them, their poisons, and organised assassinations, Protestantism would have embraced all Europe.

From this time forth commences the wholesale persecutions of the Protestants; persecutions which numbered their victims by hundreds of thousands.

The work was inaugurated by Julius III. (1550-55), when he called on Queen Mary of England to put all her non-Catholic subjects to death. For the rest his influence was as inconsiderable as that of his immediate predecessor, and he distinguished himself by nothing but his detestation of those who persisted in reading the Bible. Paul IV. (1555-59) showed far greater energy. Elizabeth of England was pronounced incapacitated from reigning by him, on account of her heresy; but the English only laughed at his objections, and all diplomatic intercourse between Rome and their government was broken off. Paul III. emulated the great Hildebrand in like manner, when he commanded Henry II. of France to appear before the apostolic judgment seat, for refusing to make war on England. King Henry had no greater inclination to obey the second than the first behest; and when the pope then cited him to answer for his disobedience at the "judgment seat of God," his majesty replied, "he devoutly hoped to present himself there, but much misdoubted meeting His Holiness at such a place."

The pope again seriously compromised his cause by

his quarrels with the Emperor Ferdinand of Germany, having determined to withhold any recognition of his election, because his majesty had accepted the crown without previous authorisation from Rome; and was still more exasperated when the new sovereign made peace with the Protestants—"a peace in violation of God's prerogatives." The consequences of the papal indignation were scarcely satisfactory; for not only was great irritation caused in Germany by such "shameless popish insolence," as it was now termed, but the kaiser ordered his ambassadors to leave Rome, and published the opinions formerly given by his chancellor, "that as the election of the emperor was a purely temporal matter, the pope was totally unjustified in meddling in it; forasmuch, the emperor was none the less emperor, without being crowned by the pope." * The pope then adopted another line of policy, and endeavoured to come to a better understanding with Ferdinand through conciliatory measures.

Under Pius IV. (1559-66) the famous Council of Trent held its sittings. It had opened in 1545, and was not closed until 1565. Its proposed objects had been the reformation of the church, and reconciliation of the Protestants; but, thanks to the Jesuits, it utterly failed in both, for the papacy still clung to the theory of its ancient prerogatives, though all the actualities of the world had so greatly changed. Yet, resist as they

* In this manifesto it is said, among other matters:—"All things coming from Rome were of old held holy or divine, now men question them mightily; and whether of the old or new religion, they make merry at the ban, when erst they would have spoken with fear for it."

might, the spirit of the age was still mightier than the bishops of Rome, and it was but a puerile assumption of Pius IV., when the Emperor Maximilian II. having notified his election in the usual diplomatic form, His Holiness, quite unasked, returned his solemn authorisation to the act. Pius V. (1566-72) indulged in a still greater absurdity when he excommunicated Queen Elizabeth; and Sixtus V. was scarcely less ridiculous in extending the ban to Henry IV. of France. Henry replied to the Bull merely by the satire, "Hotomanni Brutem Fulmen;"—(the ban of the pope edited by Hotman), in which the popes were told the most unpalatable truths, and all France laughed at the papal thunderer. Sixtus' successor, Gregory XIV., came off less well, for having renewed the Bull of excommunication against Henry, the latter caused it to be publicly burned, and prepared to create a French patriarchate completely independent of Rome.

Clement VIII., who wore the tiara from 1592 to 1605, had the pleasure of witnessing Henry's conversion to Catholicism, though he might question the influences that produced it, when the Bourbonnais jestingly declared "La France vaut bien une messe."

Clement VIIIth's successor, Paul V. (1605-21), is memorable as the last pope that ever pronounced an interdict. The republic of Venice was its object. Venice had always made itself obnoxious to the papacy by its liberalism;* but when the Venetians went so far as to

* The famous Venetian proverb, "Primo Venezeani, poi Christiani," sufficiently indicates the Republic was no very devout child of mother church.—(*Trans.*)

ordain that without the consent of the senate no new monastery should be founded, and inaugurated the practice of punishing clerical misdeeds under the same laws to which laymen were amenable (in Brescia, for instance, putting an Augustin monk publicly to death who had violated and then murdered a young girl); then, indeed, the pope lost longer power of endurance, and laid the whole territory under the ban. The senate, however, burnt the Bull of anathema, and commanded the clergy to continue their functions on pain of deprivation. All obeyed but the Jesuits and Capuchins, who therefore suffered confiscation of their property, and were driven beyond the Venetian frontier.*

The interdict was quite ineffectual, and grew a mere bye-word and jest after Paulo Sarpi's attack on it as alike illegal, unchristian, and absurd. A year later the pope, at the intercession of France, voluntarily recalled it; but this brought only fresh humiliation, for the Venetians as studiously ignored the absolution as they had ignored the ban. Consequences as unsatisfactory ensued from the negociations of Alexander VII. (1655-67) with Louis XIV.; the French ambassador in Rome, afterwards the celebrated Duke de Cregni, a proud, irritable man, was insulted by the pope's Corsican guard,†

* Among the various ecclesiastics of high rank who were commanded by the Venetian government to ignore the interdict, was the papal grand vicar and archbishop of Padua. On receiving the message, he replied, "he as yet knew not if he could obey, but in any case he should act as God might direct." The government rejoined, "God commands all those to be hung by the neck that disobey the state." Then the archbishop came at once to a satisfactory decision.

† The popes always employed a foreign body guard, as they dared not trust their own subjects. Corsica and Switzerland generally supplied them.

and, not receiving immediate satisfaction, Louis at once drove away the papal nuncio from Paris, sequestrated the province of Avignon, and despatched an army against Rome, with orders to seize the pope. But the pope's heart failed him. He humbled himself to the dust, and agreed to erect a commemorative column of penitence on the spot where the ambassador had been insulted. Still more hurtful were the effects of his successor, Innocent the Eleventh's quarrel with the Grande Monarque. Innocent refused to receive the French ambassador Lavardin, and further declared that the so-called "regal right," that is, the French king's claim on the revenues of vacant bishoprics, was a foul abuse, which ought at once to be abandoned. Exasperated beyond measure, King Louis summarily committed the papal nuncio to prison, and summoned a General Council of the clergy of France (1681) to investigate the limits of papal prerogative. A cruel blow! For the four statutes, which so closely verged on the actual emancipation of the Gallician church, were framed by this council. The statutes declared, firstly, that the Pope's authority regarded spiritual things, but did not at all regard temporal matters; that, secondly, he was subject to the superior judgment of councils and synods; thirdly, that he never had, or could have, a right to absolve subjects from their allegiance; finally, that he was in no manner infallible, since his decisions might be modified or rescinded by the voice of the general church. The pope was furious, the four statutes were burnt in Rome by the hand of the common hangman, but the fact remained notwithstanding; and though the

Jesuits, aided by Madame de Maintenon, induced Louis in his old age to partially retract them, yet the French clergy never again fell into their earlier subjection.

Still the papacy sank lower and lower, despite every sacrifice made by the Jesuits in its cause. This very "sacrifice of all things" caused it more injury than good in the end; for its black-robed, soft-footed ministers, became at last so reckless, that an universal cry of indignation arose throughout Christendom against them. They had heaped infamy on infamy, crime on crime, until the temporal power was obliged to intervene for the eradication of the dangerous society, and by so doing gave a mortal wound to the papacy. The way was led by Portugal under the great minister, Pombal; then followed Naples, Genoa, Parma, and Malta. From France they had been already banished; and in 1768 were definitely driven from Alsace and the French Netherlands. Then came an unprecedented event,—Spain also declared against them; and in 1767 banished the order, for ever, from all and every of its territories. The Jesuits found no rest or peace but in the States of the Church, whither whole ship loads were dispatched; so that the reigning pope, Clement XIII. (1758-1769), could, after a time, scarce move for the crowd besetting him. His indignation was deeply aroused by these acts: he issued Bull after Bull, denouncing them; and besought the kings, with tears, to desist from this "sinful beginning." But neither tears nor curses availed the catholic governments; all ruthlessly decreed the dissolution of the Society of Jesus. France threatened, if the pope refused the apostolic sanction, to seize his person;

and the menace would assuredly have been realised, had he not opportunely died. The same demands were made on the next pope, the famous Cardinal Ganganelli, who took the title of Clement XIV.; and on the 21st July, 1773, he dissolved the order "for ever, as mischievous and noxious." For the first time, wholesome daylight penetrated the Roman church; and its reformation was simultaneously commenced, though that reformation left untouched the Vatican and its pretensions. The great emperor, Joseph II., justly placed at the head of royal reformers, led the movement; but it was left for the French Revolution to place the seal of impotence upon the papacy. The wild republicans shrieked, "they would strangle the last king with the entrails of the last priest." They confiscated the property of the church, and finally carried off poor Pius VI., the successor of Ganganelli, from the pontifical States, and trampled both his temporal and spiritual crowns under foot. First dragged to Sienna, thence to Florence, and finally over the Alps, through snow and ice, without attendants or necessary care, to Valence on the Rhone, where, on the 29th of August, 1799, he gently sank to rest. The whole fortune left by him amounted but to fifty-six francs, and the authorities of Valence claimed it as national property. It seemed, indeed, as though the papacy had fallen for ever. Yet it was again to arise in renewed vigour, to struggle not only for fresh vantage ground of action, but to recover all that it had lost. We have to consider it under this changed aspect in a later chapter, and will close the present division of our subject with a couplet the Romans chanted with so much gusto:—

"Non abbiamo Pazienza,
Non vogliamo Eminenza,
Non vogliamo Santitá—
Ma Eguaglanza è Libertá!"

"With Patience we've done,
Of Eminence we'll none,
Of Holiness we would be free—
For Freedom and Equality."

BOOK III.

POPE AND CHASTITY.

"Wenn Bacchus und Ceres regieren,
So will Venus mit hoffiren;
Denn wenn das Fleisch wird gemást't
Mit Fressen und Saufen auf das Best,
So kommt alsbald angeritten
Der Teufel mit der Wollust Sitten,
Und sagt: man soll nach seinem Willen
Das Fleisches Lust büssen und stillen,
Sich nichts kehren um Ehe und Aegernuss
Und nichts um den Tod und die ew'ige Buss."

Aus dem Buch von den Zehn Teufeln.

CHAPTER I.

FEMALE RULE IN ROME.—THEODORA, MAROZIA. POPE JOAN LEGENDS.

During the first four or five centuries of our era, the bishops of Rome had married, like the majority of the Christian priesthood of their time, and but few examples of licentiousness then dishonoured St. Peter's throne. There were, of course, exceptions to this,—such as that exhibited by Bishop Damasus (366-384), who was not only described by his contemporaries as proud and arrogant, but his very deacons accused him of indulging his passions in defiance of the marriage vow. The pope was doubtless guilty, but the Emperor Gratianus feared the scandal, and refused to let the charge be investigated. Various other traditions, of a like nature, have come down to us; but on the whole, the early bishops of Rome were probably not worse than their contemporaries. With the fifth and sixth centuries commenced the papal system of celibacy among the dignitaries of the church; and thenceforth the Vatican was too frequently disgraced by the foulest excesses and licence by which humanity could be dishonoured.

The higher clergy had ceased to marry, because public opinion endowed the unwed priest with an aureole of peculiar purity; but alas! this purity would rarely have borne investigation. A few instances of married bishops of Rome still appeared, even to a much later date; Hadrian II. (867-71), for example, had taken to wife a lady named Stefania, and a daughter by her had been born to him; but when raised to the chair of St. Peter, he found himself compelled to put away wife and child; and both were shortly afterwards definitely disposed of, doubtless to obviate any possibility of la Signora Stefania assuming pretensions as archbishopress of Rome. Such pretensions could not have been tolerated, for the people devoutly believed in the sanctity of celibacy, and the Roman high priests dared not act counter to an opinion which might prove so useful to them.

Not long after the death of Hadrian II., a period of unbridled licence commenced for Rome and its great dignitaries. It was that included between 900 and 1050, and is generally known in ecclesiastical history as the Messalina Government, or the rule of the prostitutes. Both in Rome, and throughout central Italy, the feudal system had resulted in greatly enriching certain patrician families, who had secured the possession of numerous large domains. The heads of these families possessed, besides their fortresses in the country around, other fortified residences, called *torri* in Rome, within which a considerable troop of retainers could be quartered; and the lord never crossed his threshold without a train, fully armed, at his heels. The more wealthy and powerful these families became, the more eagerly

they sought still greater wealth and power: and, as the natural result, mutual heart burnings and feuds were unceasing. These jealousies often led to open conflicts in the streets. The German emperors, with difficulties enough in their home affairs, were too weak to maintain order in Italy; and thus a state of things ensued which too well illustrated —

> "The good old rule, the simple plan,—
> Let him get who has the power;
> Let him keep, who can."

The same condition of things prevailed throughout the peninsula as in Germany, during the so-called "Faustrecht—right of the strong hand—Period." The population of Rome was divided into parties, siding with this or that noble, whose retainers or partisans seldom met those of a rival faction without exchanging broken heads.

The counts of Tusculum, who, without doubt, were progenitors of the Colonnas, represented the most powerful family in the pontifical States: they had their seat at Tusculum, now Frascati,—the favourite resort of the rank and wealth of Rome in ancient times. Their castle was so well fortified, it was generally believed impregnable;—a matter of no small advantage in such troublous times.

The counts of Tusculum were closely allied, both by blood and marriage, to the dukes of Spoleto and the counts of Tuscany; and they gradually acquired an all-powerful influence in Roman affairs. In anno 900, partly through their individual influence, partly through that of the still more powerful counts of Tuscany, they

were beyond question the chief nobles of St. Peter's patrimony, and acknowledged no superior. At this time a lady, named Theodora, lived in Rome. She was as remarkable for her surpassing beauty, intellectual acquirements, and boundless ambition, as for her courage (which nothing daunted) and licentiousness, which, perhaps, had never been exceeded. She could not have been of plebeian origin, as she called herself *senatrix*, and had been unquestionably the wife of a senator, named Theophylactus. She adopted a mode of life, however, which, even in those days, might have outraged every feeling of decency,; and educated her two daughters, Theodora and Marozia, who were not less beautiful, keen witted and aspiring, than herself, to follow in all things her example. These three women, who never shrank from the foulest imfamy or crime, in attaining any object they had at heart, contrived, by their influence over the counts of Tusculum and Tuscany, to bring the whole patrimony of St. Peter under their sway; so that the papal throne for the next fifty years became the plaything of their caprice and their passions.

Scandals were perpetrated under the shadow of the tiara, which, for their very enormity, now might defy all credence. There was no abomination, no iniquity of which humanity could be guilty, which was not perpetrated by the popes during the first half of the tenth century. The famous apologist of the papacy, Baconius, thus describes the period :—"During this century there was a very abomination of desolation in the temple and sanctuary of the Lord. On the chair of St. Peter sat, not men, but monsters in the shape of men. Vainglo-

rious Messalinas filled with fleshly lusts, and cunning in all the forms of wickedness, governed in Rome, and prostituted the chair of St. Peter for their minions and paramours." Thus witnessed Baconius; but he speaks with far too much moderation, for never since the doomed cities of the plain were swept from the face of the earth, had there been such things enacted as then in the capital of Christendom.

This reign of the prostitutes began under Pope Sergius III., who ascended the throne anno 904. He was a son of Count Benedict of Tusculum, and a lover of Marozia, then fourteen years of age. Marozia's mother possessed unbounded influence over the count of Tuscany, and to the assistance of the latter, who with Count Benedict stormed the castle of St. Angelo, whither the reigning pope, Leo V., had taken refuge, Sergius was indebted for his elevation The allied counts at once transferred the castle to his keeping, and as it commanded the city, all opposition was at once quelled. Though Sergius owed his elevation to brute force, its validity was never contested, and he continued high priest of Christendom, though, in fact, his mistress and her mother Theodora actually wielded the papal sceptre. Devoting himself to the gratification of his passions, he only lived for the daily recurring orgies to which the walls of St. Angelo re-echoed. After his death, Marozia contrived to raise a mere unknown priest to the papal dignity, under the title of Anastasius II. Nothing is known of him, but that he was as handsome as he was licentious. He was succeeded in the spring of 914 by a certain Lando of Sabinum, a favourite of Theodora the

elder; but Peter, archbishop of Ravenna, happening to send his deacon, Johannes, to congratulate the new pope, and the deacon being a marvellous comely, stalwart fellow, he found even greater favour in the matron's eyes than Lando himself. So the latter had to vanish from the stage after a reign of six months, and Theodora made the well-favoured deacon spiritual ruler of Christendom as Pope John X. It was this John who, with Count Beringar of Friaul, stormed a fortress erected by the Saracens on the Gangliano near Rome, and slew a great many of the enemy with his own hand. He was one of the mightiest men of war that ever held the keys of St. Peter, and could wield a sword as well as the most redoubtable knight adventurer of his age; but we must not linger over his martial triumphs, our concern is with the dames who ruled through him. Marozia, whilst mistress of Pope Sergius, had borne him a son called John, but she at the same time carried on a liaison with Count Adalberto of Tuscany, to whom she also presented a son, who received the name of Alberico. These circumstances were notorious at Rome, but, notwithstanding, Guido, an elder son of the same Count Adalberto, did not scruple to marry this very Marozia, trusting, doubtless, to thus consolidate his influence in the papal city. Guido thus became stepfather to the young John (son of Sergius III.) and of Alberico, his own half-brother, both of whom were compelled to submit to his authority. Within a short period, the elder Theodora, patroness and paramour of the reigning pope, died, and Guido and his consort at once resolved, on being thus released from all further restraint, to remove this John

X. from their path, and so secure the free disposal of the apostolic throne. Guido quietly summoned his retainers one night, found his way, at their head, into St. Angelo, killing all who offered resistance, the brother of Pope John, who was to have become his own brother-in-law, among the number, and finally secured the person of the pope, though he defended himself with desperate bravery. Short shrift was afforded him; he was thrown into a dungeon, and suffocated with a pillow almost directly afterwards. Marozia was now supreme, and all Rome bowed to her will. By her tactics she soon made his consort almost absolute throughout the pontifical states, whilst his elder brother Hugo, count of Tuscany, was elected king of Lombardy and North Italy by the same occult influence.

The chair of St. Peter thus vacated had necessarily to be provided with an occupant, and Marozia caused a young priest, anno 928, to assume its honours under the name of Leo VI. He was, as we may readily conceive, a mere tool in her hands, but, probably, an inconvenient tool, for in a few weeks he was removed to make way for Stephen VI., who reigned from 929 to 931, when he also fell into disfavour with his patroness, and promptly sank from the throne to the grave. She then elevated her own son by Sergius, a youth then twenty years of age, to the pontifical dignity, as John XI. He retained it for five years, though but nominally, for his mother governed in his name. She, in the mean time, grew enamoured of her husband's brother, the king of Lombardy, who, returning her passion, they agreed she should poison Count Guido to facilitate

their own speedy union. The plan was carried out in anno 931, and Hugo, by this marriage, found himself supreme master of Rome, and enabled to indulge in almost oriental despotism over it. Great was the discontent he aroused in the city, especially amongst the oppressed families of the aristocracy. Alberico, son of Marozia and Count Adalbert of Tuscany, was not less tyrannically treated by Hugo (though his own half-brother) than the rest, and he finally resolved to break the yoke and overthrow his mother and her consort. His aunt Theodora, daughter of the elder Theodora and Pope John X., but with whom he had lived on terms of the closest intimacy, encouraged him in his resolve; and thus when one day King Hugo commanded him to fetch some water, and he exhibited an evident disinclination to obey, the king striking him on the face for the disobedience, his mistress, Theodora, who found her own mastery of Rome from the event, so worked on his resentment that he joined the faction of the malcontents that very night, and openly raised the standard of rebellion. Half the population of the capital enlisted on his side, and, though his followers were ill armed, he yet succeeded in taking the St. Angelo. King Hugo with great difficulty escaped over the walls, but Marozia and her son the pope were taken, and thrown into prison. These events happened in March, 933, and from that date, for the next twenty-one years, Alberico reigned absolute in Rome and its dependencies, though, of course, under the necessity of setting up phantom popes, in whose name his decrees were issued. The first of these was his own half-brother, John XI., who, im-

prisoned, as we have seen, never after left his place of confinement until relieved by death in 936. Marozia had been poisoned long before. Alberico then appointed Stephen VIII., but, purely in the plenitude of his own authority, without even affecting to consult either the people or priesthood. Stephen died in 942. Then followed Martin II., who, in 946, made way for Agapet II. All three "vicars of Christ" had no shadow of volition in state affairs permitted them by their master, who entitled himself "Princeps, atque omnium Romanorum senator" (Prince and senator of all the Romans). Agapet II. was thus obliged to excommunicate and declare war against King Hugo, who, since his escape from Rome, in 933, had ceaselessly carried on hostilities against Alberico. Hugo paid no regard to the anathema, but continued to prosecute the war; and not until his rival had secured the co-operation of Beringar, count of Friaul, was he ultimately overcome. It must be granted, to the honour of Alberico, that he used his victory well, devoted his best endeavours thenceforth to bring some degree of public order out of the universal anarchy into which the family feuds of the great nobles had plunged the territories beneath his sway.

As Agapet II. was still in the full vigour of youth when raised to St. Peter's Chair, it might have been anticipated he would employ the opportunity offered by the death of his patron, to secure the reality of the power he represented. But, like his two predecessors, he had grown so accustomed to the yoke, he was incapable of using freedom, even when within his grasp. Moreover, no other occupation for the hours unrequired

by his spiritual functions, had he ever known, than drinking, gaming, and still more flagrant vices. Thus, the eldest son of Aberico and Theodora, a lad of eighteen, found little difficulty in obtaining possession of the Castle of St. Angelo, and so found himself master of Rome, and the apostolic see. He at once inducted himself into the latter as Pope John XII., and it were no exaggeration to say, he proved, perhaps, the most despicable and debauched wretch that then polluted God's earth.

Not even by Sergius III. had the apostolic chair been so dishonoured as by this son of Theodora. During his reign the papal palace became a vast seraglio; the churches of Rome were given up to mummers and dancers. In place of religious worship, public festivities were held in them; whilst they re-echoed to obscene songs and bacchanal choruses. Two of his own sisters were included among his recognised mistresses; and if any woman dared resist his desires, it was but to incur still greater outrage. His own mother had been obliged to submit to his bestial appetite, and another of his father's lemans was numbered among his own. His table was a daily orgie, where he toasted Dame Venus and the devil by turns; concluding, when the freak so took him, by sallying into the streets, at the head of his wild companions, to make a bacchanal procession through Rome. He was a mighty hunter, kept a stud of two thousand horses, who were fed on almonds and figs, steeped in wine. His capitol became a very scandal to the Christian world; and when Baronius declared John XII. was "fere omnium deterrimus," ("verily,

the worst of all"), the reader may well conclude what was the opinion entertained of him by the great apologist of the papacy, and how completely the very climax of political and moral infamy was exhibited by Rome under his pontificate. Then it happened, that Kaiser Otho I., learning the true state of affairs, crossed the Alps, resolved to reduce Italy once more under German suzerainty. He besieged Count Beringar II. of Friaul, and Ivrea, the most powerful of the princes of North Italy, and marched triumphantly to Rome, where he was crowned by John XII., who meekly bowed down at the conqueror's feet.

Otho was not then aware of the innate worthlessness of the pope, and was disposed to pardon his excesses in consideration of his youth; but no sooner had the Germans left, than John, in defiance of his oath of fealty, attached himself to the faction of Beringar, and plunged Rome into the old disorders. Then the kaiser once more descended into Italy (anno 963), and the pope having as effectually plundered the treasures contained in St. Peter's as his haste allowed, made good his escape to the south of the peninsula. He still omitted not to beseech Otho's mercy; but the emperor had little inclination to exhibit a profitless clemency, and at once called a synod to investigate the pope's acts. The synod was very numerously attended; it included nearly all the bishops of Italy, many from Germany, besides sixteen cardinals. John had every chance of a fair trial, free from national prejudices; but such damning facts came to light during the investigations, both in the evidence furnished by the cardinals, and in

that of the lay witnesses, that even we, at this distance of time, shudder as we read the recital.

John was deposed, and Leo VIII. set up in his stead. Rome was restored to quiet, and the emperor retraced his steps to Germany. Scarcely had he done so, when the partisans of John, the pleasure-loving dames of Rome, and the deposed pontiff's numerous kindred among the higher families, succeeded in fomenting an insurrection, by which he soon found the means of re-possessing himself of the throne of St. Peter. Leo VIII. was obliged to fly, and happily effected his escape in safety. Some of his adherents were less fortunate; for example, Otgar, bishop of Spires, whom John caused to be scourged to death, whilst the Cardinals Johannes and Azo, were frightfully mutilated, the nose, hands, and tongue of each cut off. But these iniquities were among his last; he was soon afterwards killed by a Roman, who discovered his wife in the arms of the Holy Father, So died John XII. at scarce twenty-five years of age, a type of papal debauchery.

Now followed a long string of popes in quick succession, of whom it need only be said they emulated their predecessors, Sergius and John, with more or less success. Though Kaiser Otho, after John's death, had again visited Rome, and appointed his successor, a man devoted to the imperial interests, the power of the Tusculum faction, which had constantly nominated the popes since anno 904, was still in the ascendant; indeed, the counts of Tusculum continued, with rare exceptions, to appoint the succeeding pontiffs, during the whole of the latter part of the tenth, and the first half

of the eleventh century; and those who occupied the papal throne for any lengthened period, were all not only partisans of their house, but connected with it by consanguinity. This we see in the case of Benedict VI., elected in 972 by imperial influence, on the decease of John XIII.; for scarcely had the Emperor Otho been gathered to his fathers, than the Roman noble, Crecentius, a son of Marozia and Pope John X., took the St. Angelo by storm, at the head of the Tuscan faction, seized Benedict VI., and caused him to be immediately afterwards strangled in prison, appointing Cardinal Franconi to be the vicegerent of heaven. Franconi became Benedict VII., and is called by Gerbert the pious historian of the church, the "most iniquitous of all the monsters of ungodliness."

Obliged at length to quit Italy, to escape the vengeance of the relatives of a young girl he had dishonoured, he secured all the chief treasures contained in the churches of Rome, and took flight with his booty to Constantinople. The Tusculum party, still supreme at Rome, immediately placed a nephew of the infamous John XII. in St. Peter's chair, under the title of Benedict VII.; but Kaiser Otho II. marched over the Alps at the head of an army, and Benedict having taken flight, set up a pope in the imperial interests, called John XIV., previously known as Petrus, bishop of Pavia. This occurred in 983; but the emperor did not survive more than a few months, when Benedict returned to Rome, and by the aid of Crecentius seized the person of his rival, whom he shortly afterwards poisoned. The victor did not long enjoy his triumph, meeting death the following year in

much the same way as John XII. Such a death spares us the task of dwelling at greater length on the character of his life. We may add, however, that so bitterly had his misdeeds incensed the Romans against him, that having seized his body, they wreaked their vengeance on it by a hundred dagger wounds, then, after trailing it through the streets, finally flung it into a cesspool.

John XV. (985-996), a minion of the Tusculum faction, succeeded; but at his death, and the entrance of Otho III. into Italy, the partisans of Germany, or rather the opponents of the counts of Tusculum, gained the upper hand at Rome, and nominated each successive pope from 996 to 1012. These popes seem to have lived with greater regard to decency; for one weighty argument in their favour is, that very little is related of them. After 1012, the German party again declined in influence; indeed, Benedict IX., who reigned from 1012 to 1024, was a son of Count Gregory of Tusculum. We hear little of his licentiousness, but much of the cruelty with which he persecuted the Jews of Rome, whom he burnt by dozens as sorcerors. Popular superstition has denied him rest in the grave; and thousands of the lower class of Romans believe to this day that his ghost, coal black as the coal black horse it rides, traverses the Ghetto on each Good Friday night. At his death, his brother, Count de Toscanello, who assumed the name of John XVI., secured the vacant tiara. Though a layman, his well-employed numismatic arguments proved so convincing, that priests, nobles and people, alike willingly recognised his self election. Except this preliminary example of simony (to obtain an ecclesiastical office

by bribery was then a capital offence), little is known of him. But so much the more notorious was his successor, Benedict IX. (1033-1046): he had been but ten years old at his nomination, but he was a son of Count Alberico, the brother of the two preceding popes, and the last scion of his house. His kinsmen, by their wealth and political importance, had long regarded the papal throne as a part of their appanage. The fear their power inspired might well foster this view; and they actually had the boy crowned pope. The world beheld the strange spectacle of a child made chief lawgiver and ruler of the church. But, despite his extreme youth, all witnesses agree, no bishop of Rome ever distinguished himself by greater abuse of his office. By his fourteenth year, he surpassed, in profligacy and extravagance, all who had preceded him. So great was the public indignation excited by his conduct, that, on the tenth year of his pontificate, the party opposed to that of Tusculum, though numerically much the weaker of the two, succeeded in driving the wretched boy from Rome, and elected Sylvester III., a bishop of Sabine, in his place. The young Benedict had had great wealth and many partisans, however, and, aided by the influence of his family, succeeded in re-taking St. Angelo. But, after thrice being driven from his capital, and thrice returning, he at length felt a longer tenure of power impracticable; and on May 1, 1045, disposed of his titles for a very handsome consideration to a certain Giovanni Gratianus, who thus became the Pope Gregory VI., of whom we have spoken in a previous chapter. Benedict retained, however, a considerable portion of the papal revenues, as well as the

Lateran palace, where he hoped to indulge his vices in undisturbed privacy.

With him, the supremacy of the lords of Tusculum expired; and with him, too, passed away the scandalous prostitution of the chief dignity in the church to the caprice of courtesans and their paramours.

How the contemporary world regarded the conduct of these popes, may be gathered from the fact, that a universal belief had arisen that: "with such monstrous iniquity in the permanent head of the church, the longer existence of mankind had become impossible; and therefore the end of the world must be approaching." This belief took such firm hold of men's minds, that many documents of the time are prefaced with the words, "Approximanti fine mundi." Men could not but fear the wrath of God must be at length awakened, and that He would smite the offenders with His sword of fire. Not until the year one thousand had passed, did the dread of the advent of antichrist disappear.

Before closing this chapter, we must touch on a legend of which the reader has, doubtless, often vaguely heard. We mean that famous one concerning a Pope Joan, or Johanna.

About the middle of the ninth century, so runs the tradition, a German maiden called Johanna (some chronicles declare her of English extraction) left home with her lover, a young student, and proceeded with him to the university of Paris. To avoid exciting scandal, she dressed in masculine attire, and shared her lover's studies; so that the two were commonly known as the "insepa-

of St. Peter at Rome. Finding many attractions in the pontifical city, they determined to remain some time within it. Their learning, modesty, good manners, and good looks, soon procured them many friends; and in a short period both received ecclesiastical appointments. Johanna, who of course was known only as frater Johannes, became especially distinguished, and rose in the hierarchy step by step; until at length, on the death of Leo IV., she was raised to the papal throne as John VIII., and wielded her new powers with credit and dignity, in emulation of the more virtuous of her predecessors. Unhappily, Johanna and her lover had not abandoned their former intimacy; and thus it happened, that in the second year of her pontificate she found herself about to become a mother. The fact could without difficulty have been concealed; but an angel appeared to her, saying:—"Johanna, heavily hast thou sinned; and if thou dost not abase thyself before the world, by bringing forth thy child in the sight of the people, thou shalt be damned everlastingly."

These words terrified Johanna greatly, who was very pious, despite her shortcomings, and she did not long hesitate in her resolve. "Therefore" (so says Polonus, a Lutheran historian of the papacy), "when her hour had drawn nigh, she ordained a procession, taking her place at its head, dressed in full pontificals; and then, in the streets of Rome, between the Coliseum and the church of St. Clement's, she brought forth a son. The people were paralysed with horror; and Johanna expired of shame on the spot.*

* So runs a tradition, which for three hundred years was believed,

The first doubts of the story arose with the Renaissance, and, to the credit of the Protestant writers it must be admitted, they have done most to dispel the fable. Their investigations proved that not a single author of the ninth century refers to the story; that, moreover, Benedict III. was raised to the papal throne in 855, and thus between him and the previous pope, Leo IV., who died in 855, there was, of course, no possibility of a two years' pontificate. In fact, that the whole story was a satire on the times of Theodora and Marozia, for both sisters were installed in St. Angelo, and according the papal dignity to none but their lovers or minions, with perfect justice might have been called she popes.

without the slightest misgivings. It was even accepted at the court of Rome, where learned doctors demonstrated the goodness of God, in maintaining the unity of the church, even under a woman's rule. So complete was the credence accorded to the romance, that a monument was erected to its heroine in the cathedral of Vienne, whilst in that of Bologna her bust was placed in the series of popes exhibited there. Old books are still extant, in which the final scene of her life is represented in engravings.

CHAPTER II.

THE AVIGNON RULE.

The obloquy brought on the papacy by the period which has occupied us during the last chapter, was too deep to be speedily removed, and, indeed, we may well question if any reform of its licentiousness was effected until much later ages. We need but turn to the evidence given before the English parliament under Henry III., when Innocent IV., having become a fugitive from the wrath of Kaiser Frederick II., sought the protection of the Plantagenet monarch. "The honour of England," so ran the answer of the members, "hath long been sullied by the avarice, robbery, and trafficking in church benefices, practised by papal legates; now, forsooth, the pope himself would come and squander the possessions of our nation and church. But we are not minded to suffer this, for the papal court doth spread so foul and noisome a stench, that he (Innocent) deserveth not to find welcome in England." So said the peers of England, and thereupon Innocent, instead of going whither he had hoped, made his way with his whole court to Lyons. What were the results to the French city of this emigration? The best answer to this question is

given in the infamous letters sent by Cardinal Hugo to the Lyonese after the exodus of the papal court on the death of Frederick II. of Hohenstaufen in 1250. The cardinal says, among other amenities:—"During our residence in your city (we translate his words literally) we have been of very charitable assistance to you. On our arrival we found scarcely so many as three or four purchaseable sisters of love, whilst at our departure we leave you, so to say, a brothel, which extendeth through the city from the western to the eastern gate."* Surely, no more conclusive evidence can be needed, nor must the reader suppose the licentiousness of the papal court was confined to the cardinals and higher dignitaries to the exclusion of the popes. Innocent IV. added his full quota to the sum of iniquity; one of his bastards, indeed, under the name of Hadrian V., succeeded to his throne anno 1276. Pope Gregory X. (1271-76) showed, it seems, some greater regard for decency, for the chroniclers say that he dispossessed the bishop Henry of Luttich for the scandal the multitude of his children occasioned; they numbered sixty-three, and had been presented to him by his numerous concubines, among whom were not a few nuns. The Flemish knight who killed the said bishop for seducing his daughter, was not even excommunicated.

Pope Nicholas III. (1277) was truer to the traditions of his office; he had a great many kinsfolk, and took good care to provide for them with the best gifts offered by the church. Two "nephews" (the world persisted they were his sons) he resolved on raising to sovereign

* See Raumer's "Geschichte der Hohenstaufen."

power; the one to be duke of Tuscany, the other king of Lombardy: and he would, doubtless, have succeeded had not his plans been stayed by death. His successor, Clement IV., afforded no exception to the traditions of licentiousness recorded of the preceding popes. He exhibited, however, no inclination to squander the lands and treasure in his charge upon his bastards. We are told he had two daughters; the younger entered a convent, the elder married. To the latter he gave three hundred crowns, to the former only one hundred, declaring money was unnecessary for counting beads. Boniface VIII. was of a very different type. We have already learnt something of him as the founder of the Jubilee. This most arrogant of all the popes was as notorious for his insane profuseness as for his unbridled licence. He declared the seventh Commandment was not canonically binding, or God would not have created two sexes. By way of illustrating his doctrines, a married lady and her daughter were simultaneously his mistresses.

Yet these scandals dwindle into insignificance when compared with the riot of the papal court at Avignon. We have already seen the cause of the emigration thither, but the lovely Perigord, daughter of the Count de Fois, was the chief cause that Clement remained in France.

The life of the papal court at its new capital has been so fully described by the contemporary writers Baluzius and Mezeray, by Petrarch, and the famous Clemengis, that we need add nothing to their testimony. Clemengis

declares, "foul morals, debauchery, and licence first crept among the people of France from the days of the popes; the French people gathered as the harvest sown by the apostolic chair, a love of pomp, luxury, and extravagance; besides, to all these we must add the national crime of Italy, the concoction of deadly drugs. Such are the blessings brought by the Holy Fathers; blessing nowhere better shown than in holy Rome itself, the world's sink of iniquity." Still more emphatic are the poet Petrarch's words:—"All that hath been related of Babylon is as nothing compared to Avignon: there we may see realised all that ancient legends and poems tell of the lewdness and monstrous fornications of the heathen gods. We may there behold a Pasiphæ, a Mars and Venus bound in golden chains; Salomo with his garden of delight, his luxury, and his thousand concubines. The followers of St. Peter carry themselves in silk and gold; godliness and faith are not in fashion within their gorgeous palaces, but instead, profligacy, riot, and unholy pleasures; whilst he who is vilest, basest, most besotted with vice, is the most honoured there."

As soon as the popes had determined to remain in Avignon, they set about arranging their residence in right royal wise. At first, as there was no palace at their disposition, Clement was obliged to live in a Dominican convent, but he soon after commenced building the vast edifice which still looms over the city like an ill-omened spectre. It is, in fact, less a single palace than an incongruous agglomeration of many edifices, with trenches, walls, oubliettes, dark cells, and secret subterranean passages, combined into a great fortress. A feel-

ing of indescribable oppression falls on us as we enter its gloomy precincts; the very massiveness of its masonry has something menacing in it. A residence indeed, it is of no type St. Peter the fisherman would have chosen, but rather a royal fastness, gloomy and forbidding, as such places were wont to be in days when war constituted the chief business of men's lives. Within these walls once dwelt the popes, not, indeed, as pensive bookmen poring over black-lettered scrolls, still less as penance-worn priests seeking to merit heaven by self-mortification on earth. But they dwelt there as the mighty ones of the world amid revelry and gay festivals, robed in purple and fine linen, surrounded by fair women, with singing, dancing, love-making, in one continuous round of voluptuous pleasure. Seven popes, in all, ruled at Avignon, and each seemed bent on exceeding his predecessor in dissentiousness, greed, and despotism. The Avignon age seems to have reached its zenith under Clement VI. (1342-52); of the two previous Avignon popes, John XXII. had been remarkable for little else than his love of gold, and Benedict XII. for his love of women and wine; from him dates the favourite proverb, "bibere papaliter" (drink like a pope). Among the inmates of his harem was a sister of Francisco Petrarch, who had refused the pope's solicitations regarding her, though supported by the offer of a cardinal's hat. Her other brother, Gerardo, proved less scrupulous, and, in exchange for a heavy purse, delivered her over to His Holiness.

Within Clement VI.'s hospitable walls were gathered poets and painters, men of science, pale, vigil-worn

scholars; but still more welcome guests were those bright-eyed dames, the grace and beauty of the southern provinces of France.

Ladies, far fairer than their reputations, knights'-errant, sprightly cardinals, wrinkled philosophers, nobles of the purest lineage, and jovial monks with shaven crowns, jostled each other on their way to the apostolic presence. His weekly festivals were famous alike for their splendour, profusion, and elegant voluptuousness, and received the distinguishing appellation of the "Clementine." On such occasions it might have seemed, not a pope, but rather Aphrodite, goddess of love and beauty, held court at Avignon; nor would such a supposition have been wholly wrong, for the queen of the festivities was the lovely countess de Turenne, whose charms for many years made the head of Christendom her humblest slave. In short, Clement had a full portion of human frailties; and well might Petrarch declare "the court, ruled by him, was a labyrinth of Minos, where the Minotaur cried with fierce impatience for ever new victims, and Venus was alone adored." No wonder that those beyond the contamination of Avignon, held matron or maiden alike dishonoured by entering the gates of the city, where, indeed, the very nunneries were regarded as privileged brothels, or that Clement, when sitting in full consistory one day, had a letter placed in his hand, superscribed, "From the Devil to his brother Clement;" which, after recapitulating all the scandalous acts of the princes of the church, and their head, recommended: "Our brother, the pope, and Messieurs les cardinales," to persevere in their work, and with a

"loving greeting and shake of the hand," closed with—"Thy sisters, Greed and Debauchery, thy brethren, Atheism and Deceit, send this salutation given from the midst of hell, in the presence of the whole company of devils." Clement and his cardinals laughed over the letter, which they regarded as an excellent joke. It had been written either by Petrarch, or the archbishop of Milan.

The best illustration of the life of the Avignon popes, is furnished by the story Boccaccio recounts of the Marseillaise Jew. This Jew was a very wealthy merchant, and enjoyed the friendship and respect of many of his Christian fellow citizens. It came to pass that he fell very sick on one occasion, and then his Christian friends visited him with the greatest assiduity, hoping to achieve his conversion. They succeeded so far, that he promised, if he recovered, to studiously investigate the questions at issue between Judaism and Christianity. In a short time he was happily restored to health, and then when reminded of his promise, declared himself prepared to go at once to Avignon, and study the new faith at the feet of Christ's own vicegerent. This alarmed his friends beyond measure; for they knew any result might be expected from such a course rather than his conversion. They endeavoured to discourage him by every imaginable argument, represented that there were learned doctors and clerks at Marseilles, fully versed in all the mysteries of the Christian dogmas; but all in vain, he turned a deaf ear to their voices, and verily one day took his departure for the papal residence. Then his friends lost all hope he would ever become a Christian, and felt sore ashamed when they

bethought them of all the abominations he must there witness, whilst he would surely suppose them to have counselled him to a change, in which external forms were alone concerned. With heavy hearts they awaited his return; but, lo! the event fell out quite diverse to their expectations.

Many months was the Jew absent; he then reappeared; but had scarcely left the ship which brought him to Marseilles, than he called his friends together, and declared his resolution to become a Christian! nay, insisting they should conduct him at once to a church, where the holy rites of baptism were indeed forthwith performed by a priest. Much did his friends marvel at these things, for they could nowise understand wherefore he adopted the faith; yet they discreetly refrained from any questions until after he had been baptised. Then in the evening of the same day they all went to see their new brother, and no longer able to restrain their curiosity, demanded, "how it happened that his visit to Avignon had not filled him with loathing for Christianity?" I will unfold this to ye, replied he who had been a Jew. In Avignon, truly, I found all abominations and vices united. The nuns there are what we should call strumpets, the monks as vile as the nuns. The cardinals, yea, the pope himself, though he be called the vicegerent of Christ, are exceeded by none in Europe for evil living, and the outrage of God's laws. The papal palace is a very cesspool of abominations, that might well call for a new deluge to sweep it from the face of the earth. I turned from all I saw with a sickening at my heart; but then, involuntarily the

thought arose within me, how great, how sublime and holy must be the teaching of Christ, since it is not only undestroyed, but continueth spreading ever wider and wider, though its chief priests and great dignitaries are sunken in iniquity, and might rather be called children of the pit than children of heaven. Therefore I took counsel with my soul, and became a Christian.

CHAPTER III.

ALEXANDER VI. AND LUCRETIA BORGIA.

With Gregory XII. (1370-78) the papacy was reinstated at Rome, but the popes did not, therefore, become more exemplary or moral. From thenceforth commenced a period of more studied licentiousness, until the vices and crimes which had before sullied the tiara assumed a character at which the first instincts of nature might revolt. We shall glance as briefly as possible at the lives of those popes who occupied the interval between 1378 and 1492, that we may have greater space for the Borgia pontiff.

Urban VI. (1378-89) was so pitiful a wretch, so utterly demoralised, his very cardinals debated whether it would not be better to declare him mad and appoint a regency, or even decree his deposition on the ground of his unworthiness. Unfortunately, the pope was too quick for the reverend conspirators. He got intelligence of their proposal, and immediately had six of the number seized, and daily submitted to the rack, until but one, for whom Richard II. of England interceded, was left alive. He shielded his favourite son Prignano, who violated a nun, from all punishment, and for his gratifi-

cation, with the aid of Charles of Durazzo, deposed, and afterwards murdered Queen Johanna of Naples, who had refused to marry and share her crown with the Holy Father's bastard. He yet failed even by this crime to secure her kingdom, and Prignano had to content himself with the principality already given him by Charles III. Ultimate success might still have rewarded the pope's schemes, but they were all frustrated by his death, which occurred in 1393. He passed away, says a contemporary, despised by all men.

Alexander V. (1409), who only reigned a few months, the famous papal biographer and private secretary, Clemengis declares, "Lubentur bene et laute vivebat, bibendo vina forte et frequente" ("He lived a jocund, pleasant life, drinking strong wines right plentifully and often"). John XXIII.* (1410-17) when a mere lad, was notorious for his debauchery, lies, and deceit. As Balthazar Cossa, when attending the University of Bologna, the orgies celebrated by him and his chosen associates soon rendered his name notorious, and after a time he was forced to fly the city under fear of imprisonment for some of his misdeeds. Then, with a band of confederates, he made his way into Dalmatia, and turned pirate, but the vessel he commanded presently being taken by a Neapolitan, it was with the greatest difficulty he escaped the gallows on which all his followers expiated their offences. He then entered the priesthood, prospered, soon contrived to purchase a cardinal's hat of

* His original name was Balthazar Cossa, and, according to Clemengis ("Vota Emendationis"), the "vilest wretch that could be found on God's earth."

Pope Boniface IX., who shortly afterwards charged him with the duty of bringing the rebellious city of Bologna to submission. Cossa successfully accomplished this; but, after offering a free pardon to all the inhabitants, subjected them to outrages and oppression scarce ever equalled. Every class of society was plundered by him: he mulcted the very prostitutes, and had a thousand of the wealthiest citizens put to death, in order to obtain their property. Nuns, maidens, and matrons were all alike made the victims of his lust; we hear of two hundred violated by him. Then, when his passions had been fully sated in Bologna, the new cardinal returned to Rome, and commenced a manner of life which is sufficiently characterised for us by the fact that his brother's wife was his avowed mistress. He became an adept in poisoning; invented a peculiar poison with which he could quietly remove all who made themselves obnoxious to him—Pope Alexander V., his immediate predecessor, among the number. After Cossa's elevation to the tiara, a new field of activity presented itself, and in this he was soon completely engrossed. Simony became his favourite vice, and every office in the gift of the apostolic see was sold to the highest bidder, or bestowed on the pope's illegitimate sons, and the church plundered of everything which could be turned into hard coin.*

* The Fathers of the Church met in council at Constance to consider his conduct, when it was proved, upon irrefragable evidence, he had not only been guilty of adultery, incest, sodomy, murder, and robbery, but that during his residence at Bologna he had kept a seraglio numbering two hundred women, besides the three hundred nuns, whose complacency he had subsequently rewarded by making them abbesses, prior-

No marvel the public accuser closed the seventy various accusations against the pope with, "He cannot be regarded other than as the foe of every virtue and the sink of every iniquity; a scandal of scandals, so that all who know him declare him even like to an incarnate devil."*

Pope Pius II. (1458-64) had been much more famous as Cardinal Æneas Sylvius than subsequently, when raised to the papal throne. He had seduced an English girl in his youth at Strasburg, and continued in correspondence with the son she bore him. In one of these letters His Holiness says, "My body hath quite dried up, and my powers begin to abandon me. I loathe Aphrodite, but therefore the more devoutly yield myself to Bacchus. My chastity merits little praise in this, for, alas! it is not I that abandon the goddess, but she me." No very exemplary sentiments in a pope. After Pius II. the tiara passed to Paul II. (1464-71), of whom Weber says, "He should rather have called himself Formosus (the Handsome) than Paulus (the Little)." He

esses, &c. The witnesses heard against Pope John included cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, besides many laymen.

* Some of the higher prelates, the archbishop of Mayence, for example, undertook John's defence, whilst others declared he merited the stake and faggot. The sentence against him was not very severe; it was deposition and imprisonment for life; but after spending a few months in the fortress called "Amor di Dio, then twelve at Heidelberg in milder captivity, and, finally, two years in close confinement at Manheim; he finally purchased his freedom for 30,000 ducats, and at once proceeded with Pope Martin V. to Florence. Martin appointed him cardinal bishop of Tusculum, and, out of respect for his former dignity, ordained he should always sit on the right hand of the throne in consistory, and on a higher chair than the other cardinals. Such was the retribution for his crimes.

never appeared but with his cheeks painted, and indulged in more jewels, gold, and embroidery than any previous bishop of Rome. In mockery he was called "Our dear lady of Pitifulness," from his power of summoning tears on the smallest occasion; indeed, tears are said to have constantly risen to his eyes when they rested on his beautiful daughter for envy of her future husband. Sixtus IV. (1471-83) had so inordinate an affection for his two natural sons, that it finally involved him in very heavy crimes. He bought for the elder, Girolamo, the province of Imola from the duke of Milan, and hoped to secure Florence also for him. Lorenzo and Giulio Medici then governed the republic; but, for the success of the pope's scheme, it was necessary to remove both brothers from their office as chief patricians, or, still better, despatch them to another world. The Medici had many rivals and enemies at Florence, especially in the families of the Pazzi and Salviati, who only waited a favourable moment to achieve their destruction. The pope, well instructed of this, invited Francesco, the head of the Pazzi, to a private interview. Pazzi obeyed, came to an understanding with His Holiness, and returned to Florence to arrange the destruction of the Medici with the archbishop Salviati, the priest Stefano, and a few bold adventurers, such as Blandini and Baptista Montefecco, ready for villany of any kind that was paid with good coin. It was known the two brothers would attend mass in the church of St. Negarata on the 24th of April, 1478, and it was therefore determined to fall upon and kill them at the very moment the priest offered the

consecrated wafer, for then all the rest of the congregation would be kneeling, and consequently there was little danger of a successful rescue being attempted. The appointed Sunday came, the conspirators were gathered in the church. Blandini and Francesco dei Pazzi fell upon Giulio, the priest Stefano and Montefecco upon Lorenzo. Giulio was killed on the spot; Lorenzo, although severely wounded, escaped from his assailants into the street, and thence to his palace. Indignant at the murderous attempt, the congregation fell on the assassins, who tried to get out in the confusion, but only one of them, Blandini, succeeded, and he was subsequently given up by the Sultan Badjazet, in whose dominions he sought refuge. Pazzi, Montefecco, the archbishop, and Father Stefano were taken in the act, and summarily hung from the church windows. The pope had egregiously failed: he was beside himself with rage, and at once laid Lorenzo and the city of Florence under the interdict, and then, in conjunction with King Ferdinand of Naples, whose daughter one of his sons had married, declared war against the republic. But war proved alike abortive; for Ferdinand, at a personal interview obtained by Lorenzo, was persuaded to break his alliance with the pope, and the latter found himself forced to sue for peace, anno 1480, and renounce all hope of subduing Florence. He then tried to raise his son to the dukedom of Ferrara; to this effect concluding a treaty with the Venetians in 1481, who engaged to furnish him with aid against the reigning prince Ercole I. War was declared against Ercole, and Girolamo, who in

the meantime had been made a cardinal, placed himself at the head of the papal-Venetian forces. This campaign was fated to end much as the previous one, for Ercole having married a daughter of the king of Naples, and was, therefore, supported by him, contrived, in 1484, by his mediation to make a separate peace with the Venetians. The pope, again defeated, was obliged to renounce the hope of making his eldest born a sovereign prince of Italy; finally, however, he negociated the purchase for him of the provinces of Imola and Forla, which produced a revenue of fifty thousand scudi.

It were unjust to imagine Sixtus IV. gave all his care to Girolamo; his whole family shared his affectionate solicitude. Pietro Riario, born to the pope by his own sister, was raised by him to the cardinalate, and endowed with such profitable benefices, that he did not draw less than a hundred thousand ducats from them annually. A third son, named Raphael, when only seventeen years of age, was invested with a cardinal's hat, and the "patrimonium" provinces of Sora and Sinegaglia. The pope's nephews, Giulio, Giovanni, and Leonardo, were all made cardinals, and six other relatives of the much-tried chief shepherd of Christendom, received the same honour. He married all his nieces to men of high rank, and dowered them as beseemed so mighty a potentate. No little money might well be necessary to carry out these arrangements; but a pope who allied himself with bandits to carry out his political schemes, would not be over nice in his methods for achieving any financial measure. He was the first pope

who publicly licensed brothels in Rome; he did so in consideration of the thirty thousand ducats they yearly brought him.*

A worthy successor followed Sixtus in Innocent VIII. (1484-1492); he had no less than sixteen recognised illegitimate children,† of whom he exhibited no little paternal pride. His favourite, a certain Franceschetto, was one of these, and to provide him with land and lieges, Girolamo Riario, the son of the last pope, and possessor of Imola and Forla, had suddenly to depart this life, the 14th of April, 1486. Innocent trusted, after the murder, to transfer the cities without difficulty, and not only incited the Forlians to rise against their ruler, but provided them with a considerable armed force for the purpose. But though Girolamo was killed, his son Octavio, and his widow, the famous Catarina Sforza, who was as lovely and able, as she was courageous and energetic, had survived, and she mustering her adherents, completely routed the papal troops. Catherine even captured six of the enemy's generals, and had them at once put to death, finally obliging the Forlians to lay down their arms, acknowledge her son as his father's heir, and herself as regent during his minority.

* For further particulars of this notorious pope, see "Il diario della Citta di Roma scritto da S. Infessürá," and Muratori "Scriptores rerum ital." Tom. iii. pars. ii.

† Vespucci, a contemporary of Innocent VIII., declares in a letter to Lorenzo di Medici, still extant, that there were but seven: which is also maintained by Infessura; several other writers, on the contrary, assert the number was actually sixteen; and the poet Marullus sings,

"Octo nocens pueros genuit totidemque puellas.
Huno merito poterit dicere Roma patrem."

The scheme of papal nepotism failed miserably; but Innocent did not lose the hope of obtaining a principality for his "Franceschetto," and forthwith attacked the redoubtable Boccolino de Gozzoni, lord of the city and province of Osimo. Boccolino defended himself bravely, and the attacking forces, though commanded by the renowned Milanese, Trivulzio, lay twelve months before his capital without reducing it. The citizens even then would not have yielded, but for the interposition of Lorenzo di Medici, who induced the easy tempered Boccolino to give up his dignities for eight thousand ducats in ready money. Thus the pope, or rather "Franceschetto," obtained Osimo, and in November of the same year 1487, the long contemplated union between the papal bastard, and the daughter of Lorenzo, was celebrated.

The next place in the pope's affections was held by his daughter Theodorica, who had married a noble Genoese, and had been, of course, provided with a rich dowry. He was not less liberal towards his other children; one of his sons was made archbishop of Benevento, a second a cardinal, and a third governor of St. Angelo. The least fortunate of his daughters, in a worldly sense, wedded a Roman noble. The holy father, indeed, proved an excellent pater familias; and though he may justly be charged with many crimes, they were in great part committed in the service of his offspring.*

* In illustration of the views held by Innocent, Infessura cites in his "Diarium Rom. Urbis," an assertion once made by the holy father, that

We now approach one who exceeded all who had gone before in infamy, and whose name still remains a very epitome of every iniquity that can degrade human nature. It is Alexander VI., Roderigo Langolo by birth. He ascended the throne after the death of Innocent VIII., on the second of August, 1492. The Borgia family came originally from Valencia in Spain; though not wealthy it was of very ancient lineage, and had there borne the name of Langolo. The father of Roderigo emigrated to Venice in the hope of bettering his fortunes, and there, for reasons still unknown, assumed the name of Borgia. Young Roderigo studied the law in the city of palaces, then entered the military profession, and living much as young officers of that age were accustomed to do, soon became notorious throughout Venice for his many amours and wild adventures. After a time he abandoned the army for the church, as he saw in the latter much better promise of speedy advancement; for one of his uncles was bishop of Valencia, and had assured him of his protection. We, of course, need not anticipate the tonsure effected any change in Roderigo's manner of life; though what he had before done openly, and in the face of the world, he now did under a certain pretence of secrecy.

Among the ladies of his acquaintance was a certain Signora Vanozza, a widow, and he employed his flatteries so well, that she not only gave herself, but her whole

it "behoved every priest, for the glory of God and the Christian religion, to keep a concubinam vel saltem meritricem."

fortune, into his hands. We are told this Vanozza was very beautiful, though she could not have been very young, since she had marriageable daughters, whose charms made a marked impression on Roderigo, then only nineteen years of age. He kept his passions concealed from the mother, and so well succeeded, that when Signora Vanozza some time afterwards fell seriously ill, she, by will, confided her daughters to his guardianship. She died very shortly, and then the young priest could give free way to his desires. Both sisters were seduced by him; but the elder, awakened too late to a consciousness of her guilt, retired from the world, and hid her shame and remorse in a convent. The younger suffered from no such compunction, and became the mistress of her late mother's paramour, though the fact was concealed as much as possible from public observation.

Whilst Roderigo was leading this life at Venice, the bishop of Valencia was chosen pope, under the title of Calixtus III.; but the nephew lost no time in proceeding to Rome, to offer his congratulations, and remind his now all-powerful kinsman of those earlier promises of assistance. Calixtus received his visitor with great cordiality; and though the latter had not reached his twenty-third year, inducted him into a benefice producing twelve thousand florins, at no great interval making him bishop, and then archbishop of Valencia, and finally gratified the aspirant with a cardinal's hat, and an appanage of twenty-eight thousand ducats. All these appointments followed each other within a space

of three years, for Calixtus died in 1458, and well exemplify the manner in which the highest honours of the church were then abused.

Roderigo, once raised to the cardinalate, devoted his whole endeavours to the attainment of the supreme object of his ambition,—the papal throne; and so well did he disguise his whole character, that he was presently cited as a model of every priestly virtue. His mistress had followed him to Rome: she did not enter his palace, though example was rife enough that would have justified her doing so. Roderigo employed his influence so well, with a discreet but needy Spanish hidalgo of his acquaintance, that the latter consented to act as sham husband for the daughter of Vanossa; and, furnished with money by his patron, soon assumed a very respectable standing in the city as a Castilian count. The cardinal's daily visits to the countess were explained by a report, spread by him, of her mother's near relationship to the Borgia family. Thus, but few persons guessed the five children the fair dame presented to her lord were, in reality, the offspring of "his eminence," the cardinal. These five included four boys and one girl:—Federico, Cæsare, Godfredo, Ludovico, and Lucretia; and their ecclesiastical parent spared no money that might fit them to assume the rank borne by their supposed father. Cardinal Roderigo by no means remained strictly faithful to the young Vanossa during the period of his cardinalate, and unhesitatingly consoled himself for his frequent absences from her during his diplomatic missions, as nuncio to various European courts, by other amours. But of these peccadilloes scarce any echo was heard in Rome,

where he had so effectually surrounded his name with an aureole of sanctity, that on the death of Innocent VIII., public opinion unanimously called him to the vacant throne. He had, moreover, spared neither hard coin nor fair words to secure a majority of the cardinals in his favour; whilst pretending such complete physical debility and exhaustion, that it might well seem he was not long for this world. The fruit of his machinations was shown triumphantly on August 11, 1492, when he was elected pope by twenty-two of the cardinals against five, to the universal delight of the Roman people. The five who had opposed him knew his character better, and whispered together, not too loudly, that once more a reign of violence and debauchery would be inaugurated, such as never, perhaps, had yet been equalled. The king of Naples judged with not less accuracy. In a letter to his consort, he wrote: "A man hath been placed on St. Peter's throne who will assuredly hand over all Christendom into the jaws of the devil."

How well his previsions were justified, was seen as soon as Roderigo had taken his pontifical title as Alexander VI. His first proceeding was to imprison the cardinals who had ventured to recal to him the promises made before his election, and shortly poisoned the more refractory of the number. The rest were brought to a discreeter frame of mind, and His Holiness might hope the Sacred College would offer no further hindrance to his proceedings. He then laid aside the veil which had shielded his paternity, and removed the five children to the papal residence. His eldest son, Federico, was endowed with considerable church property, in the gift of

the apostolic see; and King Ferdinand of Arragon induced, for certain reciprocal benefits, to make him duke of Candia. Cæsar, the second born, became archbishop of Valencia. The third, Ludovico, was created a cardinal; and Godfredo, the youngest, provided with a wealthy barony. Lucretia, who had become a very marvel of beauty, was not neglected; for though wedded to a Spaniard of high rank, her affectionate parent found the means of investing her with still higher honours. He simply decreed her divorce, consoling the bereaved husband with a purse of three thousand ducats; and having for some time lived with her, as he had done with her mother, then gave her in marriage to Giovanni Sforza, lord of Pesaro. The marriage was celebrated in the Vatican, with royal magnificence: three hundred cardinals, bishops, princes, and nobles of high rank, were present, with as many of the noblest ladies of Rome. Each of the former, indeed, had his appointed female companion,—so says the satirical papal private secretary, Infessura; but notwithstanding all the pomp and solemnity of the ceremony, the union lasted only a few years. Guicciardini explains: "The pope could not endure the rivalship of his son-in-law."

The Holy Father, whilst occupied with these family offices, learnt, to his great satisfaction, that Charles VIII. was about to make war on King Ferdinand of Naples; and the latter, in his alarm, readily consented to every demand made by the Borgia, so he might secure his alliance. Among the stipulations then agreed on, it was settled that the pope's eldest son should receive a yearly revenue of ten thousand ducats, and the highest

office in the gift of the Neapolitan crown; that his second son, Cæsar, should be endowed with the wealthiest benefices in Naples; and his youngest, made prince of Squillaca, and espouse the king's daughter, Sancia. King Ferdinand consented to everything; he was in too great need of papal support to debate the terms; and the marriage of Godfredo and the princess was solemnised at Naples, with the greatest splendour. As the bridal company travelled on to Rome, festivities, by Alexander's orders, awaited them in every city through which they passed, as though the hero of the scene had been a great monarch's heir, rather than a priest's bastard. Charles VIII. in the meantime advanced into Italy, regardless of the papal ban, and Alexander was driven to seek succour against the French,—first of the Venetians, then of Kaiser Maximilian, then finally of Sultan Badjazet. But his entreaties met with a like repulse wherever he turned; and it behoved him to find some other outlet from the difficulty. An embassy was despatched to the king of France,* bearing the solemn assurance, that the Holy Father was ready to renounce all previous engagements with King Ferdinand; and inviting Charles, in the most pressing manner, to Rome, where the pope would hold himself in readiness to crown his majesty king of Naples. Charles caught at the bait, hastened to Rome, received the papal benediction, thence marched to Naples, and put King Ferdinand to flight. The monarch of France

* The ambassadors taking with them, by way of amicable greeting from the pope, a great store of choice provisions for the king and his followers; including bread, meat, fish, poultry, eggs, cheese, oranges, figs, and fifty barrels of wine,—and sixteen well-favoured damsels,—so that "illorum necessitatibus providerent."

was soon to learn the friendship his new coadjutor had professed was a mere trick: during the whole time Alexander had never ceased his negociations with Milan, Venice, and the German empire; and carried things so far, that an alliance, defensive and offensive, was formally concluded between him and the three States. So soon as Charles got wind of all these counter-schemes, he at once set out for Rome, to punish the perjured priest; but Alexander learning this intention through his spies, sought safety in Perugia, within whose walls he could set the king at defiance; for the French could not lay siege to the place, as they were obliged to hurry back to France, or the pope's allies would have cut off their retreat. Alexander and Ferdinand remained masters of the field: the former employed the king's withdrawal to mulct the Colonnas (who had espoused the French interests, and even demanded the deposition of the pope) of great part of their immense possessions, which he divided among the sons of Vanossa; the latter re-conquered his kingdom, and drove the last remaining Frenchman over his frontiers. He could not long enjoy his triumph, dying very shortly; and in default of direct male heirs, left the crown to his uncle, Frederick.

The pope having passed triumphantly through this period of trial and anxiety, was now at liberty to apply his thoughts to the satisfactory settlement of his house. He raised the city and province of Benevento, included in the states of the church, into a duchy, and bestowed them on his eldest son, the Duke of Candia. It brought no good to the recipient, for Cæsar Borgia, cardinal of

Valencia, was bitterly incensed at such a favour being accorded his brother, and his jealousy reached its climax on finding that a certain Roman signora, to whose favour he pretended, gave her preference to the new duke. The cardinal resolved to be rid of his rival, and commissioned four of the band of assassins he kept in his pay to effect this end. The day chosen was the 14th or 15th of June, 1497. On that evening the two brothers had agreed to take supper with their mother, and thus Cæsar had the best opportunity for delivering his victim into the murderer's hands. The meal was prolonged until nearly midnight, and the two brothers left, apparently on the best understanding. The next morning the duke of Candia was missing, no trace of him could be found; seven days later his body was discovered in the Tiber, with nine dagger wounds through his heart. Alexander almost lost his senses at the news, and his grief grew frantic when some persons who had witnessed the deed accused Cardinal Cæsar of the fratricide, whilst the latter unconcernedly acknowledged the fact, and met his father without one sign of remorse or compunction. It appeared the mother had been aware of the plot, but, conscious of Cæsar's superior talents and consequent capability of serving the family interests far better than his weaker and more scrupulous brother, she offered no opposition to it. Alexander at length fell in with her views, absolved his younger son of the crime, and permitted him to renounce the priestly calling, and devote himself to politics and war. The release of a cardinal from his vows, and his return to civil life had been quite unprecedented, but Alexander

cared as little for church canons as for moral laws, and at once despatched Cæsar to Naples, and demanded the hand of the eldest daughter of the king for him, with the castle of Taranto as a dowry, and the reversion of the Neapolitan crown in the event of the death of the king's sickly and only son. King Frederick at once refused these demands, declaring that a king's daughter was far too high a match for a priest's bastard, even though the priest were pope. Alexander was little inclined to brook harsh truths, and from that moment began to put his plans in order for wreaking his vengeance on Frederick. An admirable opportunity soon offered, and he eagerly clutched at it, though to be paid for by the ruin of Italy, and the death of many hundred thousand human victims. When Charles VIII. died in 1498, the throne of France passed to Louis XII., who had been compelled by Louis XI. to marry the deformed Princess Johanna, when deeply attached to the lovely Anne of Bretagne. The pope, who was naturally aware of these circumstances, sent a legate to Paris to offer the king canonical permission to put away his consort and wed the Princess Anne, though, of course, under certain specified conditions. His majesty had no more ardent wish, and at once agreed to the propositions, and shortly afterwards the following treaty was entered into by the two potentates:—the pope consented to pronounce the desired divorce, and support the king's claims to the kingdom of Naples and dukedom of Milan; Louis XII., on his part, agreed to furnish his ally with thirty thousand ducats, and endow Cæsar Borgia with the provinces of Valentinois and Diois in Dauphiné, yielding a

revenue of twenty thousand livres, and a ducal title; thirdly, to bestow on him the hand of the fair Charlotte d'Albret, daughter of one of the richest and most powerful nobles of France, the Sire d'Albret, count of Havre, Perigord, and Castrès, an ancestor, on the female side, of Henri IV.; finally, to assist the pope in destroying the aristocracy of central Italy, and in founding a powerful duchy within the states of the church. Scarcely was the treaty concluded, when both contracting parties took the preliminary steps for its fulfilment. Cæsar was made Duc de Valentinois, and received the hand of Charlotte d'Albret. King Louis XII. marched with a powerful army into Italy, and entered Milan in triumph on the 6th of October, 1499. Cæsar was not idle; as soon as a body of French auxiliaries could be added to his own Swiss troops, he applied himself without delay to the removal, or annihilation rather, of the most powerful families of central Italy, whose domains he had resolved to unite into a broad principality for himself. His first measures were against Forli and Imola: then attacking Pesaro, Rimini, and Faenza,* and, as he had not only a considerable army

* Faenza was so resolutely defended by the citizens and their ruler Manfred Astore III., who was but sixteen years of age, that during ten months Cæsar scarcely made any progress in the siege; at length, having offered Manfred the undisturbed possession of his allodial domains, and promised to respect both the lives and property of the citizens, who were reduced to great extremity for want of food, Faenza capitulated. But the ill-starred and too beautiful Manfred and his natural brother, Octavio, were dragged to Rome, there subjected to the most revolting treatment by Cæsar, and subsequently by Cæsar's father; and when the Borgias grew weary of the wretched victims, they caused them both to be strangled. The bodies were thrown into the Tiber, and only found

at his disposal but employed every manœuvre of treason, bribery, and deceit, all five provinces were secured without any great difficulty; and by the close of 1501, complete success crowned his ambition. Imola, Forli, Faenza, Cesena, Pesara, and Rimini, with the lordship and town of Forli, were included in the general title of the dukedom of Romagna, awarded by the pope to Cæsar and his heirs.

A great triumph had been attained by Alexander in thus founding a temporal sovereignty for the Borgia family, or rather in transforming the states of the church into their temporal inheritance. The pope's care was now to provide for his remaining children, better than he had done as yet; he initiated these measures by divorcing his daughter from Duke Sforza in order to marry her to Duke Alfonso of Biscaglia, a natural son of the king of Naples. This was her third husband, but he, too, soon became obnoxious to her father, so assassins were set on him (anno 1501) in St. Peter's, but as the wounds they inflicted were not mortal, Alexander had him strangled in bed a few days after. Lucretia again took up her residence in the Vatican on a footing of the most revolting intimacy with its master, and ruled Rome as though she were pope in her own person, and he her vicegerent. By Alexander's authorisation she was empowered to open all letters addressed to him, and even issue decrees in his name; to convene the cardinals in council, and pre-

some months afterwards: Manfred with a rope round his neck, and Octavio with his hands bound. When their identity had been established, they were buried in the graveyard of a monastery.

side at their deliberations; in fact, her own will or caprice, set the sole bounds to her authority. Within a few years she was united to her fourth and last consort, Alfonso d'Este, the heir of the dukedom of Ferrara, and thus secured elevation to sovereign rank. Lucretia was satisfactorily settled; not so the two younger sons of the pope, Roderigo, of whom the pope's daughter was at once mother and sister, and Giovanni, the offspring of Giulia Farnese, generally called Giulia Bella. Giulia had been sold to the pope by her brother for a cardinal's hat; the same brother afterwards ascended the papal throne as Paul III. To make Alexander's youngest born great seignors, Cæsar was commissioned to conquer Piombino and Elba, both held by Prince Iacomo IV. of Appiano, who fortunately made good his escape to France, or he would assuredly have lost his life as well as his lands. This triumph effected (September, 1501), Duke Guidobaldo of Urbino was marked for the next victim. The pope had so won over the infatuated noble by fair words, that he aided Cæsar with his best troops in the campaign against Piombino; then Cæsar threw off the mask, fell on his late ally, who was totally unsuspicious of treachery, and, at a single blow, destroyed his whole army. Guidobaldo escaped alive, notwithstanding all the efforts made by Cæsar to secure him, and found protection in Venice. Prince Giulio Cæsare Varano of Camerino stood next on the doomed list; but Cæsar did not meet at first with complete success; though he made himself master of Camerino, to the conqueror's great disgust Giulio and his three sons eluded him, and sought refuge with

Count Ramiccio, son-in-law of the old prince, at Matelica. The pope had now to come to Cæsar's aid. He wrote a very friendly letter to the prince of Camerino, excused the late proceedings as well as might be, and invited him and the young princes to an interview at Urbino, where the questions in dispute could be discussed in all amity. Varano fell into the trap, went to Urbino with his three sons, and had scarcely arrived, when he and they were set upon by hired bravos and strangled. With these several acquisitions and the forfeited estates of the Colonnas and Savellis, Alexander constituted two dukedoms, with which Giovanni and Roderico were endowed.

At length, but unhappily much too late, the nobles discovered the object of the Borgias was to annihilate them in detail, and they, in their extremity, united in a general league for mutual defence, September, 1502, at La Maggione, near Massima. Of this league, the Orsini, the lord of Sienna, the lord of Fermo, and the lord of Bologna, were the most prominent members. They collected an army of ten thousand men with little difficulty; for all Italy was ready to rise, so exasperated had the whole country grown at the iniquities of Cæsar and his father. Affairs assumed a threatening aspect for the Borgia cause, and the Holy Father had to propitiate fortune by a new act of treachery. He wrote to the chiefs of the league, offering very favourable terms, and solemnly taking oath he had no other object but peace and justice. The league at first refused to entertain his proposals; but the various members were gradually won over in detail by the baits he skilfully

offered to each; and then the articles of a treaty were solemnly signed, by which the nobles were to be for ever secured in the enjoyment of their possessions, and a lasting peace bestowed on the Roman states. Finally, as the seal of complete reconciliation and friendship, a meeting was appointed at Sinigaglia (December, 1502), where the pope, his sons, and all the chief nobles of the church territories appeared.

Everything went well at the commencement of the feast, the wine cup circulated merrily, treachery was undreamed of by the guests; when suddenly Carlo, the captain of Cæsar's assassins, rushed into the hall, followed by a number of his underlings. The pope and Cæsar disappeared by a side door, and within a few minutes Francesco and Paolo Orsini, Eufreducci de Fermo, and the lord of Castellon, were murdered; a few of their friends managed to effect their escape in the confusion, and the rest were thrown into prison. The possessions of the victims were, of course, confiscated; and now as there was no opponent of any mark left in central Italy, Alexander trusted to completely realise his long cherished scheme—unite the Romagna with the other provinces, constituting the patrimony of St. Peter into a kingdom for the house of Borgia; so that the triple crown of St. Peter might become part of its royal appanage. A circumstance, however, was approaching, fated not only to put an end to these hopes, but to extinguish for ever all the meteoric splendours of the Langolo family—it was the death of Alexander.

It will be readily understood vast sums were needed

to indulge the pope's licentious and luxurious habits, support his minions and mistresses, provide for his children, and maintain the wars carried on by his eldest son, whose mercenaries were always liberally paid; and among his financial resources was the systematised sale of church preferments, and of every post which as head of the church fell to his disposal. It too frequently happened that the men whom he had constituted bishops or cardinals, persisted in living inconveniently long, however he might desire to dispose of their offices to other aspirants. In such cases there were only the alternatives of irritating delay, poison, or cold steel. Summary departures to the other world implied by the latter courses, became a regular part of Alexander's system; wealthy cardinals and laymen even, in Rome, were frequently called on to illustrate it, as he assumed the right of inheriting their property in the name of the church. After the massacre of Sinigaglia, the pope had determined to make himself master of Florence, and thus give a comelier rounding to his future kingdom; but such an undertaking required ample supplies, and unhappily the papal coffers were very low. Guicciardini* declares, Alexander and Cæsar determined, therefore, to poison his eminence Monsignore Corneto, and nine other cardinals, to obtain the free disposal of their dignities and private property. A cardinal's hat then brought thirty thousand ducats.

The invitations for a supper were sent out; it was

* Guicciardini (born 1482) may be regarded as a perfectly unprejudiced authority.

summer, and the pope was to entertain his friends in a garden, at some little distance from the Vatican. The arrangements for the rustic festival were assumed by Cæsar, as well as the preparation of the poisoned wine. In order that the deadly beverage should not be mistaken for any other, Cæsar gave it into the charge of a trusty attendant, directing him to let no one touch it but those whom he should point out. The servant conveyed the wine to the vineyard, and placed it apart. Alexander's cellarer observing this asked the reason, and Cæsar's man replied:—"Oh, it is a very choice vintage, and intended only for certain favoured persons in the company;" a reply which the cellarer probably found quite reasonable. His Holiness arrived almost immediately afterwards, having something to talk over with his son before the guests arrived. By a strange chance Alexander was fated to forget a little gold amulet, containing a crumb of transubstantiated wafer, which he always carried about his person, as it had been prophesied he would not die so long as he did not part with the charm. Becoming suddenly aware he had left this priceless trinket upon a table in his private apartments, he hastily sent off his son's confidential servitor to fetch it; scarcely had the man left when the pope bade the cellarer give him a cup of wine, the oppressive heat of the day making him feel unusually thirsty. The cellarer naturally wished to give his master of the best, and concluding that the wine so carefully put aside by Cæsar's servant must be so, at once filled a flagon, and placed it on the seat by the side of His Holiness. Alexander, unsuspicious of harm,

filled a large cup, and drank it off hastily. Cæsar arriving shortly afterwards, followed his father's example, and emptied another cup of the same deadly draught. In a quarter of an hour the guests began to arrive; they had taken their place at table, the attendants appeared with the choicest viands; but before a morsel had passed Alexander's lips, he was seized in the throes of the poison agony, and fell to the ground, writhing like a trodden worm. The same symptoms were almost immediately exhibited by Cæsar, and, of course, every haste was used to bring the noble sufferers to their palaces. The doctors summoned, at once recognised the signs of poison, and prescribed the best antidotes in their pharmacopœia; but the drug was too powerful; no remedy had any effect on the pope, who died within a few days, August 9th, 1503; and though Cæsar's youth and iron constitution saved his life, he had to struggle for six months desperately with death before the peril was overcome.*

So closed the career of Alexander VI. His last hours were, indeed, terrible; his flesh seemed, whilst he still lived, to grow putrid, and fell from his bones; his tongue swelled, turned black, and hung from his lips, whence issued a pestilential effluvium; his whole body was covered with sores, so that he could scarcely have been recognised. No one would approach him in his last hours, and even the customary prayers for the dying were unspoken over his solitary couch. All

* During his last illness Pope Alexander's whole skin peeled off, and Alexander Gordon, his contemporary, declares, that "his skin was flecked like unto a tiger's." The poison used was probably white arsenic.

Rome waited not for the announcement of his death to break into open rejoicing, and when his body was afterwards laid in state within St. Peter's, a strong guard of soldiers was necessary to keep the people from insulting the lifeless remains. Such was the intense hate the tyrant had excited. Never, indeed, had even the papal throne been so dishonoured as by him; the crimes and excesses he committed would fill volumes, and yet not all be enumerated. Hundreds were poisoned by his orders; and so callous had custom made his conscience, that when news of a victim's death was brought, he would merely ejaculate "requiescat in pace." To satisfy his lust of gold, he caused those he had murdered to be accused of imaginary crimes, as a pretext for escheating their private possessions. We have already given several examples of his perfidy; we will but add one more very characteristic instance. Alexander had a serious misunderstanding with Ferdinand, king of Arragon, regarding a dispensation from conventual vows granted to a certain nun. He would gladly have found some grounds for rescinding the dispensation, or at least of avoiding the responsibility involved by it, and therefore charged the archbishop of Cosenza, his secretary, of issuing the brief without the papal authorisation, and imprisoned his grace in the castle of St. Angelo as a deceiver and forger. No man, least of all King Ferdinand, believed the archbishop guilty, and the latter positively denied the charge brought against him. The pope sent his most confidential minion, the bishop of Tula, to the prisoner, with orders to say, "His Holiness was well aware of his innocence, but if the arch-

bishop would assume the responsibility of the dispensation, and save the pope from a false position, he should not only receive full pardon but the highest honours in the gift of Rome. The archbishop believed and acknowledged himself guilty before witnesses. Alexander was triumphant, though he had still much difficulty in appeasing the king of Arragon. The archbishop, however, was not pardoned; the fate reserved for him was deprivation of all dignities, confiscation of all possessions, and imprisonment for life on bread and water. The cruelty of the pope was, if possible, surpassed by his licentiousness; the Vatican in his reign became a very den of abominations, the worst excesses of the worst days of the Roman empire were repeated, or surpassed, within its walls. The very churches were not safe from the universal pollution. He caused his beautiful paramour, Giulia, to be painted for one of them as a half-nude Madonna, and he kneeling as a high-priest at her feet. Alexander's vices, like his villany, were so thorough in their abandonment of all the bounds of moral law or social decency, that we very well regard them as unequalled in the traditions of historic crime. He had no sense of shame: his worst acts were perpetrated unblushingly in the face of day, as though virtue itself were changed to infamy, and the vilest sins were virtue. It may be worthy remark that the foul disease which some writers have declared first imported into Europe by the Spaniards from America, actually appeared under Alexander's pontificate, during Charles VIIIth's campaign in Naples.

We close this chapter with a few words on the last

days of the Borgias. When Alexander expired, Cæsar lay sick almost to death, and quite incapable of taking those measures he would in other circumstances have adopted. He had long determined on his course of action in the event of his father's demise, and his plans were so well laid that they could scarcely have failed, if not in making himself pope, at least in securing one of his own creatures on the throne. All the preliminary steps were arranged with singular tact, but Cæsar left out of his calculations that he, the prime mover of the scheme, might be lying desperately ill, incapable not only of action but even of thought. As soon as his state became known, the Orsini, and all those families whose property had been seized by Alexander, returned from exile and united in the determination to overthrow the Borgias. The cardinals who, with rare exceptions, had all been appointed by the late pope, still felt so much the spell of the Borgia authority, that they appointed a new pope, Sixtus V., completely devoted to Cæsar's interests, but, after a reign of but four weeks, he was poisoned by the opposition faction, whose influence was greatly on the increase. Then succeeded Cardinal delle Rovere as Julius II. (1503-13), who had been a steady foe of the Borgias, and was a nephew of the late Pope Sixtus. Delle Rovere had very prudently hastened to Cæsar, who was still an invalid, and proposed they should forget their former enmity, and become fast friends for life or death. Thus, on the 29th of October, 1503, a formal arrangement was entered into by which Cæsar undertook to secure the votes of all the cardinals attached to his interest, in favour of his

new ally; and the latter in return promised to maintain Cæsar in his former post of Gonfaloniere (commander-in-chief) of the papal forces. Cæsar fulfilled his part of the contract, but it is strange so consummate a deceiver should have trusted Delle Rovere would keep a promise, when, having attained his end, it could no longer advantage him. In fact, it was evident, after a few weeks, that Cæsar, who had deceived so many, was at length completely outwitted. Scarcely had the new pope taken his seat on the throne, than he demanded the keys of the chief fortresses of the Romagna from his late confederate, and when the latter hesitated to give them up, caused him to be immediately arrested. In thus acting, Julius II. trusted for impunity partly to the support of the Colonna and Orsini families, partly to the continued illness of Cæsar, though he had still so much fear of the redoubtable Borgia name, that he had the prisoner carried off to a secure dungeon at Ostia on the very night of his seizure. Cæsar remained there five months, and having in the meantime greatly recovered his health, naturally employed his thoughts in contriving a scheme of escape. It proved successful, and he reached Naples in April, 1504. He had chosen Naples as his place of refuge because the viceroy, Gonsalvo da Cordova, had been his personal friend, and now solemnly promised him full freedom and protection. The pope, however, well knew how to manage the Spaniard: Cæsar was re-arrested and sent off to Spain ere a month had elapsed since his arrival. He was then consigned to the fortress of Medina del Campo, and received but stern hospitality from King Ferdinand, who considered the

opportunity an excellent one for ingratiating himself with the new pontiff. But the bold spirit of the Borgia was still unconquered, and, after a captivity of two years, he succeeded, by filing through the bars of his window, in lowering himself to the ground with strips of linen cut from his sheets. He sought refuge with his wife's brother, the king of Navarre, who not only received the fugitive in the most friendly manner, but gave him a post in the royal army. Cæsar, who but two years since had been supreme ruler of a dukedom which might have vied with the domains of many sovereign princes, must have keenly felt the humiliation of his present subordinate position; happily, his philosophy was not long tried, for he died a few months later, March 12th, 1507, at the siege of the petty fortress of Viana.

With him fell all his brothers; the new pope had as little compunction in making himself master of their possessions as of the Romagna, and everything claimed by Cæsar. The Borgia family sank into poverty far more rapidly than it had risen to riches: only Lucretia escaped the general ruin; she died, in 1520, as duchess of Ferrara.*

* The epitaph, composed by the poet Pontanus, for Lucretia, ran :—

"Hic jacet in tumuli Lucretia nomine, sed re
Thais, Alexandri filia spousa, nurus."

"She was Lucretia hight, who lieth here, a Thais she, in sooth:
The daughter, son's wife, and spouse of Alexander."

CHAPTER IV.

NEPOTISM.

THE popes, up to the period we have reached in our last chapter, generally had the candour to acknowledge the children presented to them by their mistresses.

From henceforth, however, the occupants of St. Peter's chair, probably from the scandal brought on it by Innocent VIII. and Alexander VI., constantly styled their illegitimate offspring their nephews, nieces, or cousins. It was felt desirable that, though the church was still to pay for its hierarch's bastards, that at least its reputation should be respected.

Julius II. (1503-1513) occupied himself in the reconquest of the papal territories alienated by his predecessors; and as he, therefore, spent nearly the whole period of his pontificate in the camp, it is no marvel his manners were greatly those of an old moss trooper. The Emperor Maximilian, who was passionately devoted to field sports, declared, laughing: "Wenn unser Herr Gott müste die Welt nicht in seine besondere Obhut nähme, so es derselben unter einem Kaiser der nicht ist als ein Jäger, und einem so versoffenen Pabst als Julius II., schlecht genug ergehen." ("If the Lord God did not

take special good heed of the world, it would get into a pretty mess, under an emperor who is nothing but a hunter, and a tippling pope, like Julius.")

Nor were the weaknesses of Pope Julius confined to wine alone; they were quite as great where women were concerned. His master of the court ceremonies declares, that on Good Friday, 1508, it was impossible for His Holiness to let his foot be kissed: "Quia totus erat ex morbo gallico ulcerosus."

The next pontiff, Leo X. (1513-1522), a son of Lorenzo di Medici, was a victim to the same malady; it is asserted, this was in fact the immediate cause of his elevation to the papal throne. The symptoms were so threatening that, though he was but thirty-seven years of age, the cardinals elected him in the full anticipation of his speedy demise. Leo, as the son of the all-powerful Lorenzo, had been made a cardinal in his thirteenth year, and simultaneously endowed with a dozen or so of rich benefices. The election was effected after a very brief consultation;—rumour said the unsavoury odour emanating from the pontiff expectant had not a little to do with this rapidity. Leo did not gratify his colleagues, however, by dying in the first year of his pontificate; though during the eight it actually lasted, his influence was very little felt in church polity. He was a famous gastronome, loved bright eyes, cards and hunting; cultivated the society of wits, poets and players; and maintained a more brilliant court than any secular monarch of his age. His profuseness grew proverbial; and many were the love adventures associated with his name. Rome, under him, became a second Sybaris. Hadrian

VI., Leo's successor, was so regardless of papal traditions, that he dared denounce the catholic church as utterly demoralised; and that this demoralisation had originated in the papal vices, which cried aloud to heaven for vengeance. Nor was he content with mere protestations; he determined to thoroughly reform its more flagrant evils, and set effectual barriers against their recurrence in the future. The cardinals were, however, so horror-stricken at the contemplated proceedings, they soon administered a potion to the originator, which set his disturbing projects at rest; and Hadrian died eight months from the commencement of his reign. The Sacred College took good heed to choose no second Hadrian, giving the tiara in fact to the late Pope Leo's most intimate friend, who assumed the new honours as Clement VII., and retained them from 1523 to 1534. The election was none the less canonically invalid, Clement being an illegitimate son of Giulio di Medici;* and illegitimacy was a recognised bar to church preferment. But the cardinals felt little compunction in ignoring a statute more or less, if their own interests suffered by it. Clement VII. reigned in much the same manner as his kinsman, Leo X.; and though his court was, perhaps, less brilliant, it was no wit less licentious.

* The pope was very sensitive on this matter. A Benedictine monk at Florence having suggested, in a sermon, that His Holiness had not been born under the marriage sacrament, Clement had the poor brother dragged from the monastery where he had sought refuge and thrown into one of the dungeons of St. Angelo, under sentence of death. The sentence was not at once carried out; but, little by little, the captive's allowance of food was diminished, until he gradually perished of starvation.

Paul III. (1534-49), who had sold his sister, Giulia, for a cardinal's hat, next mounted St. Peter's chair. No very exemplary life could be anticipated from his antecedents. Whilst Cardinal Farnese, his mistress, Lola, had given him two sons, both legitimated by Pope Julius II., a proceeding that might well excite our doubts, but that the Bull * for the purpose is still extant.

Paul III. was so overwhelmed with grief on the death of his eldest born, that though his ambition was soothed by Pietro Luigis's young heir, Octavio, who wedded Margareta, an illegitimate daughter of Kaiser Charles V., and succeeded to the dukedom, he gradually sank, and expired within two years, November 1, 1549.

* The Bull bears date July 8th, 1508, and was printed in Affos, "Vita di Pier Luigi Farnese, primo duca di Parma: Milano, 1821." How much the cardinal disbursed for this document, is not stated; though "Veduta in Roma" stands on it, and proves it to have been a monetary arrangement. The younger of the boys, thus legitimated, died in childhood; the elder, Pietro Luigi Farnese, was invested by Paul III., immediately on the latter's elevation to the papacy, with the cities and territories of Parma and Piacenza, annexed to the tiara by Julius II., and which were constituted a duchy in honour of their new lord. Pietro Luigi did not long enjoy his honours; his tyrannous conduct raised him a host of mortal enemies.* A conspiracy was organised by some of the chief nobles of Parma, in September, 1557, when Pietro was killed, and his corpse hung from a window of the citadel, until devoured by the vultures.

* He caused the death of the celebrated Bishop Cosimo da Gheri, of Fano, in a manner too revolting to be related here. All Italy was horror-stricken at the deed; but the pope felt no compunction in absolving his son from what he regarded as a venial sin. Many ecclesiastical historians have endeavoured to disprove the story; but it is, unfortunately, but too well attested, and not only by contemporary witnesses, among whom we may cite the Florentine, Barchi, and Benevenuto Cellini. In our own day, Signor Affo, of Milan, has found incontestable proofs of the fact.

The latter months of his life had been employed by him in providing for the other members of his family; Ascanio Sforza, son of his daughter Constanza, and the world-renowned Alexander Farnese, second born of his son Pietro Luigi, among the number. Both, though but fourteen years of age, were raised to the cardinalate.

The life of the next pope, Julius III. (1550-1555), was even more scandalous than that of Paul III. As Cardinal Gioceri, he had distinguished himself by his wild licentiousness and buffoonery. He and a certain Cardinal Crecentius kept a seraglio in common; and as the parentage of its infant occupants was necessarily doubtful, their Eminences amicably shared the expenses of education and maintenance between them.

The pope, whilst still Cardinal Gioceri, had had a great taste for monkeys, and kept a large number. Their principal attendant was a lad of sixteen, scarcely less ugly and mischievous than his charges, and known throughout Rome by the nickname of Simia (ape). Immediately on attaining the pontifical dignity, Gioceri presented this master of the menagerie with a cardinal's hat, and several wealthy benefices. Such an example will sufficiently indicate the pope's general conduct for us. The same pontiff held a revision of the courtesans in Rome, when it was found no less than forty thousand were established there.

In Paul IV. (1555-1559) the church was no better represented. He was a proud, passionate, cruel tyrant. The Roman people at his death threw down the monument he had erected in his own honour on the Capitoline hill, broke off the head and an arm, and after

dragging it, amid loud execration, through the streets, finally cast it into the Tiber.

Pius V. and Gregory XIII. (1572-85), were no less cruel, though the latter especially added lust to cruelty. Of his numerous illegitimate offspring we need only mention Giovanni Buoncompagni, who was not only raised to the cardinalate by the Holy Father, but so richly endowed with church property, that the other princes of the church exhibited evident signs of discontent. He also gave a red hat to one of his nephews, and took every means of richly providing for all his family.

Sixtus V. (1585-1590) followed devoutly in the footsteps of his predecessor. Under no former papal ruler had so many executions taken place in Rome. He accounted for his summary mode of procedure, by declaring, "He liked better to see gibbets active than overcrowded prisons."*

Sixtus provided munificently for his sister Camilla, and her children. Camilla was made a princess, though, like her mother, she had previously gained her livelihood by washing. Her two sons became high ecclesiastical dignitaries, and her daughters were married to

* His cruelty was too well exhibited in his treatment of an unfortunate jester, who had written on Pasquin's column, "The pope wants a washerwoman, his mother having retired from business." When Sixtus heard the story, he offered a reward of one thousand ducats to whoever gave information of the author, or to the author himself, whose life should be spared, if self-confessed. The jester upon this came forward, and acknowledged the fact, and the pope kept his word, spared his life, gave even the promised thousand ducats—but not until the poor wretch's tongue had been torn out, and both his hands cut off.

the highest nobles of Rome; one to an Orsini, the other to a Colonna. He was not less generous in the bestowal of church land and treasure; of the latter his family received some four million ducats.

Paul V. (1605-21) was, perhaps, still more famous for nepotism; with him originated the later dignities and importance of the Borghese house. It had held a high position, both in Rome and Sienna, for many years; but not until Cardinal Camillo Borghese ascended the papal throne as Pope Paul V., did it attain its princely importance. Scarcely, however, was the new pontiff in possession of his dignities, than he appointed his brother Francesco, Gonfaloniere, whilst on Marco Antonio, son of his dead brother Battista Borghese, he bestowed the principality of Sulmona, and obtained for him the title of a grandee of Spain. He was even more generous still to Scipio Caffarelli, his sister's son, whom, on taking the name of Borghese, he raised to the cardinalate, and so richly endowed, that the fortunate youth was enabled to build the Villa Borghese,* standing near the Porta del Popolo, in Rome. The greater part of the money required for these objects was obtained by the most nefarious means, through the secret execution, or rather murder, of the Cenci family, whose vast property was immediately confiscated, and made over to Cardinal Scipio.

The affair happened thus. Francesco Cenci had made

* The Villa Borghese, with its magnificent grounds, is three miles and three quarters in circumference, and was of old famous for its rare artistic collections; they are now in great part removed to Paris, the famous dying gladiator among them.

a second marriage in 1600, when the several children by his first wife were already grown up. Soon afterwards reports became prevalent of his infamous conduct towards these children. His eldest son, Giacomo, openly complained of the tyranny of his father and stepmother, as did his daughter Beatrix, whose beauty was celebrated throughout Rome. Two years had scarcely elapsed, when Francesco was found assassinated in the streets. Investigations were at once commenced, as the Cenci were very wealthy; but, despite all inquiries, no trace of the murderer could be found. Suddenly, two men, professional brigands and assassins, appeared as witnesses, and made oath that Beatrix, and her brother Giacomo, had wished to engage their services for the murder in question; and though they had refused compliance, other agents had doubtless been discovered to do it. The evidence was of the most suspicious nature; for not only were the men by their very profession rendered unworthy belief, but it was even whispered their assertions had been obtained by heavy bribes from the young Cardinal Borghese. Pope Paul, regardless of this, caused both Giacomo and Beatrix to be arrested, and skilfully spread abroad a general belief in their guilt, founded on their previous complaints of the murdered man's conduct. As the accused denied the charge, apparently in the full consciousness of innocence, Paul had them stretched on the rack until the desired admissions had been wrung from their agony. Beatrix was then privately made away with in prison, and Giacomo killed by a blow on the head; their property was secured for Cardinal Scipio

Cafarelli Borghese, though a rightful heir to it still existed in their surviving brother, who, in any case, was far too young to have participated in their guilt. Might not the very name of this Borghese villa make its visitors shudder with horror when they remember how it was obtained.

Of Paul V.'s successor, Gregory XV. (1621-23), perhaps it should be stated to his credit that he remained faithful to the lady whose affections he had possessed as a cardinal, or so Heidegger, in his "History of the Papacy," declares. Cardinal Barberini, who next occupied St. Peter's chair as Urban VIII. (1623-44), acted very differently. He maintained, not only a very numerous seraglio, but provided for his illegitimate progeny in right royal style, though he carefully avoided recognising them but as nephews or nieces. To Francesco and Antonio, Barberini gave cardinals' hats, presented them to the richest benefices in his gift, and, moreover, with several rich estates, which were either church patrimony or had been purchased with ecclesiastical funds. A third nephew, Taddeo Barberini, was made præfect of Rome and Gonfaloniere; the pope purchased the town and lordship of Palestrina for him from the Colonnas, and called on the duke of Parma to renounce a part of the principality of Castro in his favour. The duke, relying on the justice of his cause, refused to comply; this refusal was immediately answered from Rome by sentence of excommunication, the pope sending an army to secure full effect to it. The duke, however, was so well supported by the Venetians and several other allies, that Urban renounced his design almost as

soon as commenced, and had to seek some other means of enriching his nephews, in fact, by squeezing as much from church revenues, and filching as much from the church lands as he dared venture on. No less a sum than twenty million scudi was thus appropriated by him; no wonder the Romans declared, "Orbem bellis, urbem gabellis implevit"—("He wrapped the world in wars, and the city in taxes").

After Urban VIII., Cardinal Pamphili was chosen pope, under the name of Innocent X. (1644-55), and assuredly none of St. Peter's successors was ever more under distaff government than he. The lady to whom the questionable honour of the fact is due, was a certain Donna Olympia, a Maldachini by birth, and widow of the pope's brother. Whilst her husband was still alive she had lived on the most intimate terms with Cardinal Pamphili.* She had great personal charms; but her avarice and ambition were even greater than her beauty. The pope was so completely under her influence he never dared oppose her wishes, and thus during his whole pontificate Donna Olympia held supreme sway at Rome, both in matters ecclesiastical and temporal. All decrees originated with her, and many were signed by her hand, though, of course, she employed the name of the pope. Whoever desired a favour from the apostolic chair, whoever had a petition to present, must first make application to her, though it was useless to do so

* Donna Olympia has found a special biographer in the well-known papal writer Letti, who, under the assumed name of Gualdo, relates the various particulars of her life. The book was entitled "Vita della donna Olympia," and appeared in 1666.

with empty hands. The fair donna was not satisfied, however, with the presents of her protégés; she sold every office, lay and clerical, in the gift of the pope to the highest bidder, and throughout the papal territory, both church and state were administered, with rare exceptions, by men as ignorant as they were worthless and venal. In short, a system grew up greatly like that of Madame Pompadour in France, or of Sarah Marlborough in England, in later times. We may thus readily imagine the Romans had little love for Innocent X., especially when, with his intellect still more enfeebled by age, Olympia persuaded him to issue the infamous corn monopoly laws, by which the most fruitful provinces of Italy were reduced to misery and famine. Hatred and discontent grew with each year, and as an insurrection was hopeless, the popular feeling found vent in bitter satires. A medal was struck at Florence bearing Donna Olympia on one side in the pontifical robes; on the reverse, Pope Innocent in a coif, with a spinning wheel beside him. Such gibes were barren of effect, for when Cardinal Pencirollo, with rare candour, informed Innocent of the state of public feeling, and especially of the contempt into which St. Peter's throne had fallen, though His Holiness for a time put his mistress away, he found he could not long exist without her; she was recalled, and, in a few weeks, re-established in her former power. During his last illness no one dared offer him medicine but Olympia, no one dared sit by his pillow but Olympia, and if she were absent a moment his impatience became unendurable. He had reached his eightieth year, when he at length expired in her

arms, loved, perhaps, by none, hated by hundreds of thousands, and despised by all Europe. The blood and treasure of St. Peter's patrimony had so long been unrelentingly sacrificed to the parasites and favourites of the popes, that the world longed for once to see an honest man on the papal throne, one who might in some degree satisfy the qualifications demanded by his office. The cardinals determined to appoint their colleague Monsignore Chigi—a very type of moderation, economy, and virtue; but scarcely had Fabio Chigi changed his name for that of Alexander VII. than he became as confessedly false, cunning, vain, voluptuous, and extravagant a Pontifex Maximus as had ever insulted Christendom by outraging all the precepts of Christianity. Two popular sayings still exist which take their origin from him, and attest the estimation in which he was held; the one says: "lies were his element;" the other is in four words, "Cardinale santo, pontifice demonio"—("Saint as a cardinal, devil as pope"). Alexander VII. had solemnly sworn to the cardinals never to receive one of his kindred within the Vatican, and, above all things, to remove the abuses which had assumed such monstrous proportions under his predecessors. At the commencement of his reign there seemed some hope he would keep his word. He lived with the greatest simplicity, or even asceticism rather, rarely eating anything but bread, figs, and chesnuts, and holding meat in abhorrence; drank nothing but water, and that from a skull, that he might have a *memento mori* constantly beneath his eyes; and his coffin was placed by his bedside. Within twelve months, however, a great change took

place, and the same scheme of oppression and favouritism was recommenced as that employed by Urban VIII. when the Barberini, locust-like, devoured the land. A knight of Malta was the first nephew that made his appearance at court, and the people said, in allusion to the white symbol on his cloak, "here comes the cross, the procession will soon follow;" they were perfectly right, for the "first" was soon followed by four other nephews, and then began the course of organised spoliation which had made Olympia so much hated. The pope kept his word, however, in that he "received none of the new arrivals in the Vatican," studiously riding out far beyond the walls of Rome, or even as far as Sienna, to show his affection and conscientiousness simultaneously in each case. He had promised Olympia the undisturbed enjoyment of her fortune in consideration of a bribe of one million ducats; she, however, was shortly banished by him to Oviedo, and mulcted of another five million; nor, probably, would the pope have rested satisfied with this, but her death occurring soon afterwards, she escaped from his clutches, and her heirs shared their inheritance in equal parts with his nephews, who thus secured the half of the booty.

The next three successors of Alexander VII. need not occupy us; strange to say, they appear to have had no nephews at all; but their moderation in this particular was amply compensated by Cardinal Ottoboni, who, as Alexander VIII., occupied the throne from 1689 to 1691. As he was eighty years of age at his nomination, he probably felt there was no time to lose; and immediately transferred every post that fell vacant to

members of his own family, and created a great batch of cardinals merely to gratify the "nephews." His chief favourite, among them, was a lad but twenty years of age, but whom he at once invested with a scarlet hat, and allowed such overweening privileges, that no one could gain admission to the "presence" without previously securing the good will of the youthful cardinal; a necessity that proved very costly to those who had recourse to it.

The reader may well be weary of the subject matter of this chapter; and we therefore pass over as briefly as possible the numerous examples of nepotism given by later popes. Moreover, measures were taken of later times to preserve at least an outward show of decorum, that the religious world might not have open cause of scandal. Only Clement XI. (1700-1721) offered an exception to this rule, exhibiting too singular a pleasure in visiting the painter Marotti, whose daughter's beauty was not less famous than her father's talent. Clement was no less assiduous a visitor of his fair sister-in-law, the wife of Horatius Albani; and the world was probably not wrong in attributing something more than mere brotherly affection as the cause. His recognition of the truth, that "wine cheereth the heart of man," was so thorough, that he would often gather a select circle of jovial monks in symposium, when the wine cup circulated until the whole of the party lay prone beneath its influence. Of nepotism, he cannot, however, be charged. Clement VIII. (1758-66), and Pius VI. (1775-1800), were both flagrant instances of the vice.

The latter paid dearly for his weakness; for when the

French carried him off to Florence, almost as a prisoner, the accompanying "nephews" suddenly abandoned him in his need, taking all his ready money with them.

With this instance of the ingratitude of, perhaps, the Last of the Nephews, we close our third book; convinced that, with the details from its text we have ventured to give, the reader has already had somewhat more than enough.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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